

THE
BRITISH MONTHS;

A POEM,

IN TWELVE PARTS.

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

Lord, who would live turmoiled in the Court,
And may enjoy such quiet walks as these?

SHAKESPEARE, *King Henry VI.*, Part 2

Did he not moralize this spectacle?

O, yes, into a thousand similes.

SHAKESPEARE, *As You Like it*.

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J U L Y.

'Tis bright JULY. The fleeting year
Has half fulfill'd its just career.
And from the imperial Roman named,
Whose care from varying length reclaim'd
And caus'd the year its race to run
Commensurate with the ruling sun,
And gave each month, in course inroll'd,
The space, which now it holds, to hold:—
From JULIUS named, the bright JULY,
First of the second moiety, 10
To take his post assign'd prepares:
And at his start two equal shares
Well nigh the summer's glowing tide,
More near the annual round divide.

'Tis bright JULY. The ORB OF LIGHT
Hath reach'd on yon north-western height,
Or ere he sets, the SELFSAME GOAL,
The selfsame station tow'rd the pole,
First won a few brief nights ago!
Why is it, though as rich a glow 20
Grace now, as then, that glorious sky;
Though deck'd with "all the quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance*," that late
Attended on his regal state;

* Shakespeare; *Othello*.

Seem we with LESS UNMIX'D DELIGHT
 To ponder that illumin'd height?
 Why seems a sort of shadowy veil
 In the mind's eye to rise, and sail
 Contiguous, and the scene imbue
 With somewhat of a sombre hue? 30

'Tis that the mind, from present good
 Abstracted, in her fitful mood
 Bethinks her, that meanwhile the sun
 Has of his annual circles run
 Most northward his celestial race:
 And day by day, at first of space
 So small that scarce the casual eye
 Is prompt the difference to descry,
 Contracts more near the east and west
 His place of rising and of rest; 40
 Sinking withal his noonday arch,
 And hastening by his daily march
 At later dawn, and speedier night,
 To shorten his career of light:—
 That he, who lately held his way
 With pomp augmented day by day,
 Now day by day forbears to urge
 His wheels to so remote a verge,
 Curtail'd of his solstitial strength,
 And nightless splendour; till at length 50
 By slow but sure degrees the day
 Shall share with night but equal sway,
 Then yield with vanquish'd beams the room
 To dark midwinter's lengthen'd gloom.
 It seems a feeling, to the mind
 Congenial of our anxious kind,

On scenes of cherish'd PLEASURE PAST
 A longing lingering look to cast
 Regretful, and with fearful glance
 Forestall the FUTURE SCENE'S advance. 60
 More wise are they, the blessings given
 Who take with thanks to bounteous heaven,
 Content with Providence's plan;
 Nor while remoter scenes they scan
 With forward or reverted eyes,
 Perverse the present good despise!
 More wise, who now the bright JULY
 ENJOY with THANKFUL HEARTS, nor sigh,
 While back their thoughts recurring stray
 To past delights of June or May; 70
 Nor with presageful thought forestall
 Distrest the equinoctial squall,
 Which strews the autumnal leaves; or storm,
 That shakes cold winter's naked form!

And when shall VISION OF DELIGHT
 Greet, if not now, the raptur'd sight?
 Whether the SUN UNCLOUDED hide
 His aspect in the glass-like tide,
 While his rich beams their lustre throw
 O'er skies above, and sea below, 80
 And sea and sky together hold
 United in one flood of gold.—
 Whether, about his place of rest,
 The CLOUDS in thousand liveries drest
 Their rainbow-painted colours blend;
 Or in a fleecy pile ascend

Of Alp-like masses snowy white,
 Edg'd with a fringe of golden light ;
 Or in broad fragments through the air
 Slow floating, shapes romantick wear, 90
 Picturing, by ever varying change,
 Whate'er within her ample range
 Creative nature's realm contains,
 And fiction's plastick fancy feigns ;
 Or the bright flood of splendour break
 With feathery fan, or tissued streak,
 Or motley rows of fishlike scale ;
 Or upward soar with thinner veil
 And thinner, till they melt from sight
 Lost in blue air and liquid light :— 100
 Scarce from her magazine of fair,
 And grand, and wonderful, and rare,
 Does nature's round a sight supply
 More beauteous than the drapery,
 Wherewith yon goodly cope is hung :
 More beauteous never, than among
 The EVENING gleams of SUMMER skies,
 When all the rich diversities
 Of light, and shade, and iris hues,
 And forms detach'd, combin'd, diffuse 110
 O'er heav'n's serene and glowing face
 A prodigality of grace.

Then more majestically grand,
 If seaward "like a human hand,"
 Far in the horizontal skies
 "A little cloud appear to rise,"
 White as the virgin snow-wreath spread
 Untouch'd on Alpine mountain's head :

Alone in that cerulean scene,
 When not a breath the calm serene 120
 Disturbs, nor spot nor speck beside
 Defiles the azure concave wide.

Such cloud from CARMEL'S height of old
 From the GREAT SEA was seen unfold,
 When drought o'er broad ESDRELA'S plain
 Held the parch'd brooks, its blackening train,
 Indicative to Israel's seer
 Of storm and rain approaching near*.
 Such cloud beneath our western skies,
 To the skill'd sailor's wary eyes, 130
 As from the sea it peers, though fair
 The day, and pure and bright the air,
 Portends beneath the illusive form
 The gathering of the summer storm.

Now upward, onward, through heaven's arch
 That "little cloud" its GRADUAL MARCH
 Holds statefully; and, as it goes,
 Large, and more large, and larger grows,
 Still steering windward, and the glance
 Reflecting on its slow advance 140
 Of the bright sun-beams: till the "hand,"
 In size so seem'd it, wide expand
 A curtain o'er the waning sky:
 And in its course the sun more nigh,
Here dark with inky blackness; *there*
 Like furnace-smoke of murky glare;
 Tipt with his light, its wave-like cove
There curling forward from above;

* 1 Kings xviii. 44, 45.

At length ingulph'd the orb of light
It swallows in meridian night. 150

Then comes the AERIAL WARFARE! Keen
And bright, the rifted clouds between,
As if the welkin were on fire,
With sheeted blaze, or forked spire
Acute, the lightning's vollied flash:—
The mutter'd growl, the roar, the crash,
Like some high beetling fort o'erthrown
And toppled headlong, stone on stone.
Peal after peal, from the echoing sky
Discharg'd, of heaven's artillery, 160
And roll succeeding roll: with crush
Ethereal and the downward rush
Of torrent rain, as if were riven
Anew the floodgates of high heaven.

'Tis not without a thrilling sense,
At nature's dread magnificence,
Of solemn AWE, akin to fear,
Of FEAR perhaps itself, we hear
And see the tempest's startling sound!
Signs of such mighty power astound 170
And cause the staggering mind to reel,
Smit by the unnerving shock, and feel
Its own small strength appearing less,
By contrast with that mightiness:
Mix'd with alarm, lest what it knows
By sad experiment to those,
Who haply meet its sweepy sway,
So free from all escape or stay,
So full of peril and affright,
Should on its own frail dwelling light! 180

Ah, HAPLESS THEY, expos'd to bide,
 On the lone heath, or forest-side,
 Or mountain shelterless and drear,
 The pelting of such storm severe!
 MORE HAPLESS, if unwise they seek
 A shelter insecure and weak,
 To the frail cot or leafy wood
 By that relentless storm pursued!

Such hapless lot 'twas THEIRS to prove,
 A friendly band, in league of love 190
 United, by the halcyon day
 Allur'd in joyousness to stray,
 Where MALVERN's beacon-crested crown
Here looks on ridgy woodlands down,
 Orchards with blushing fruitage stor'd,
 And mountain zone of HEREFORD;
There on fair WORCESTER's pastur'd leas,
 And, bosom'd in the tufted trees,
 Of antique grace the village fane,
 The lordly abbot's whilome reign. 200
 Pure was the air, the day was bright,
 As form'd for joyance and delight:
 In joyance and delight they climb,
 In health's fresh bloom and youthful prime,
 The zigzag path's slow mountain way,
 And o'er the grassy greensward stray.
 Sudden, black clouds involve the sky:
 The storm's at hand: alarm'd they fly
 To yon lone hut, their sole defence,
 The gift of kind beneficence 210
 To those who on the mountain's crest
 Might seek the wearied limb to rest,

Or with rich view of hill and mead
Below the wandering eyesight fed.

O'erjoy'd they hail the welcome seat :
They sit : they hear the tempest beat,
As fiercer and more fierce it grows.
Exulting in their safe repose,
They hear the thunder's rattling sound ;
Far off along the flaming ground 220
They see the fire careering run :—
But whither ?—Ask no more : 'tis done,—
What heart can hear, nor hearing bleed ?—
The piteous, strange, distressful deed !

Four youthful forms the tempest caught :
Four youthful forms the refuge sought
Safe reckon'd of that mountain seat :
Forth issuing from their joint retreat,
Two, only two, appear to tell
The story ; and to-morrow's KNELL 230
Their partners to their kindred earth,
Late full of love, and youth, and mirth,
Ah, lovely now no more ! shall trust,
“ Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ! ”

TOLL FOR THE YOUNG ! through whom hath past
With subtle touch the electrick blast !
The spirits to their God are fled :
Their bodies prostrate lie and dead ;
But scarce a spot is there to show
The passage of the fatal blow ! 240

TOLL FOR THE YOUNG! They little knew,
 When their lov'd home they bade adieu,
 That brief adieu would be the last!—
 They little knew, the day, that cast
 About their path so clear a light,
 Would whelm them in impervious night!

TOLL FOR THE YOUNG! Their kindred kind,
 Hopes, joys, affections left behind!
 Yet was the pang of parting light,
 A moment wing'd the spirit's flight; 250
 And scarce, 'as past the fleeting breath,
 They felt "the bitterness of death!"

Then rather be the DEATH BELL TOLL'D
 For the lost comfort of the OLD!
 For them, whose hearts expecting yearn
 To see the chariot wheels return,
 Which bore their children on their way,
 All youthful, healthful, joyous, gay!

Alas! along the darken'd road,
 Charg'd with its melancholy load, 260
 Soon shall in solemn pomp appear
 The plumed hearse, the pall-clad bier.
 TOLL FOR THE OLD! They ne'er shall strain
 Their children to their breast again!

MYSTERIOUS are the ways of God!
 Of them, whose careless footsteps trod

That morning MALVERN's beacon'd height,
 Why did the visitation light
 On *that* selected party? Why
 On *these*, and pass their fellows by, 270
 Untouch'd, uninjur'd? He, who here
 Surveys in memory's mirrour clear
 The features of that fatal scene,
 The hill, the hut, the grassy green,
 Traced by his feet the day before,
 Again the morrow's eve; the roar
 Who heard of that dread thunder's sound,
 Who saw the flash that smote the ground,
 Safe in yon abbey's shade beneath;
 Why did he 'scape the stroke of death? 280
 The fate, which that sad pair befell,
 Why does he still survive to tell;
 And hang a melancholy verse
 In memory on their early herse?

Such mystery 'tis not ours to solve,
 Nor pierce the clouds, which oft involve
 God's doings! But 'tis ours to own,
 Howe'er "his footsteps be not known,
 His march amid the sea he keeps,
 His pathway 'mid the mighty deeps*." 290
 'Tis ours before his throne to bow;
 And own, who made, has knowledge how,
 To rule his creatures; and to trust
 In Him, the good, the wise, the just.
 But chief 'tis ours, when death's pale horse,
 Wing'd with the vollied lightning's force,

Goes forth, and scatters from his crest
 The noontide storm, the midnight pest,
 And thousands fall around, beside ;
 To think on Him, whose feathers hide 300
 Our dwelling from the deadly blast ;
 To count each menac'd danger past,
 Each moment's yet prolong'd delay,
 Our day of grace, salvation's day ;
 On Him in times of need recline,
 And still, the more his mercies shine,
 The more his bounteous name adore,
 And better serve, and love Him more !

As yet the year is in its pride :
 And if the SUN at morning tide 310
 His orient face less promptly show,
 And o'er his setting radiance throw
 At day's decline an earlier shade ;
 If more and more the twilight fade ;
 And that white lucid circle fail
 To skirt the horizon, and with veil
 Of thicker shade and more profound
 Dark midnight spread her mantle round :
 Yet nought from his meridian tower
 Of keen and penetrating POWER, 320
 Though less and less his orb exalt
 Its noonstead in the azure vault,
 Does the bright sun as yet resign,
 Or with less fervid RADIANCE shine.
 But rather, as the summer *days*
 Then beam most hotly, when his rays

Declining through the ethereal space,
 Erewhile inflam'd, on earth's warm face
 With force accumulated beat:

So with access of *annual* heat 330

Receding from his loftiest post
 His beams their strongest fervour boast,
 And past the glow of earlier June
 Is bright JULY's maturer noon.

What month asserts a warmer sky,
 More clear, more bright, than BRIGHT JULY ;
 When the blue heav'n, which wont to lower
 With many a dense, solstitial shower,
 Has chas'd the curtain'd clouds away,
 And summer suns resume their sway? 340

Unless perhaps the man of God,
 Who deem'd the church than churchyard sod
 To hold his lifeless frame less meet ;
 And, when to that forbidden seat
 His flock with over-zealous love
 Essay'd the buried corpse to move,
 With six long weeks of torrent rain
 Proclaim'd the rash endeavour vain,
 And graced his tomb with many a sign
 Miraculous of pow'r divine :— 350

Unless SAINT SWITHUN interfere ;
 And, when the month in due career
 Has all but reach'd the midmost day,
 Tenacious of transmissive sway,
 For full twice twenty days and more
 Discharge the clouds' collected store !

Such tales our darkling fathers knew
 In error's days, and held them true !

Such tales, the dregs of error old,
 There are who now in credence hold ; 360
 Such tales and worse : of selfish wile
 Begot on ignorance, to beguile
 Man's reason, and divert the scope
 Of holy faith and ardent hope !
 Alas for them, to whom is given *
 Eyesight and light by gracious heaven ;
 Forbid meanwhile by men aright
 To use their eyesight or their light !
 Alas for them still more, who bind,
 What God would loose, the human mind ; 370
 Who nor themselves nor others free
 From bonds, though charged with freedom's key ;
 And, heedless of His will, retain
 The Christian in a heathen chain !

But let Saint Swithun's legend pass !
 More truly will the *TUBE of GLASS,
 With pure, MERCURIAL COLUMN fill'd,
 Signs of the approaching weather yield.
 If the rais'd fluid downward tend
 Day after day, and still descend, 380
 Mark'd by the graduated scale ;
 Believe the sign, that soon will fail,
 Though fair and flattering to the eye,
 The splendour of the cloudless sky.
 Or if, by long and hasty strides,
 Now up, now down, the silver glides,
 Be cautious ! Such brisk movements tell
 Of days unfix'd and changeable, *

Not by the actual height alone,
 But by well-mark'd relation shown. 390
 But if the silver upward rise,
 Though dense the rain and dark the skies,
 And still in one direction move,
 Ascending; and disclose above
 The steady column's rounded top,
 Aspiring like a convex drop:
 Then know, howe'er involved in gloom,
 Soon will the conquering sun resume
 The imperial rod, and day by day
 Serene the aërial empire sway. 400

Nor wants there many an OUTWARD SIGN.

Whence old experience may divine
 The future drought, the approaching storm
 From vapoury clouds' still varying form;
 From winds, in changeful currents borne;
 From dewy eve, or misty morn;
 From hills, which far remov'd or near,
 The same the space between, appear;
 Or high or low the swallow's flight;
 From clamorous rook, or soaring kite; 410
 From antick gestures of the swine;
 From household birds, or pastur'd kine;
 From the swift sea-fowl's dripping wings;
 From slimy frogs, and creeping things,
 And watchful insect tribes; from none
 More certain than the rapid sun,
 The stars' pure lustre, and more bright
 Or dim the silver orb of night.
 "For ever to the wary eye
 Sure signs the approaching times supply: 420.

And still the symptoms of to-day
 Tomorrow's character betray:"
 So sang the MANTUAN BARD of yore,
 And to the signs, from Grecian lore
 Deriv'd, his Roman prudence join'd:
 And they, who note the signs, will find
 The truth by juster rules they tell,
 Than fam'd Saint Swithun's oracle.

In this bright season, when with heat
 Confirm'd the summer sunbeams beat 430
 On the dry earth, nor breezes chill
 Come loaded with rheumatick ill;
 In lonely thought, or converse bland,
 Or with amusive book in hand,
 'Tis sweet in yon o'erarching BOWER
 To pass retir'd the sultry hour.
 There with the TEA-TREE's purple bloom,
 And fragrant stars that waft perfume
 From white and yellow JESSAMINE,
 Plants of more homely growth intwine, 440
 Indigenous: the WOODBINE wreath,
 And EGLANTINE with dulcet breath;
 And golden HOP, that still his course
 Guides by the fostering sun, nor force
 Will that his natural bent destroy;
 And with green bloom the TRAVELLER'S JOY.
 Most beauteous when its flow'rs assume
 Their autumn form of feathery plume.
 The TRAVELLER'S JOY! name well bestow'd
 On that wild plant, which, by the road 450

Of southern England, to adorn
 Fails not the hedge of prickly thorn,
 Or wilding rose-bush, apt to creep
 O'er the dry limestone's craggy steep.
 There still a gay companion near
 To the way-faring "traveller"
 Its lithe and straggling wreaths proclaim:
 Thence honour'd with its gladsome name,
 By him, the plants' HISTORIAN old
 In good ELIZA's days, who told 460
 In tale exact, with figures true,
 And gave to all their honours due,
 Each plant that merry England held,
 In garden trim, or open field,
 Native, or by his fostering care
 Induced to breathe our foreign air,
 Well-natur'd GERARD! And in days,
 To more of scientific praise
 Aspiring, and with more command
 Of graver's style, and painter's hand, 470
 Be still his peerless worth confest,
 Our ENGLAND's early HERBARIST!
 Who 'mid his joy and great delight,
 To see before his raptur'd sight,
 "The earth with herbs and flow'rs bespread,
 As with a robe apparelled
 Of broider'd work, and garnish'd fair
 With pearls and jewels rich and rare;"
 With more delight his mental eye
 Uprais'd the Maker to descry; 480
 Saw in his works "his wisdom shine,
 And pow'r, and workmanship divine;

And mark'd, how earth's seen wonders tell
The praise of God invisible*."

True use of knowledge, when it draws
The mind to ponder nature's CAUSE;
And makes man's intellectual wealth
Subservient to his spirit's health!

And now's the season, when the bright
Calm days with fearlessness invite, 490
To float on some smooth RIVER's tide,
Whose waters through fair landscapes glide,
Through rural scenes, and woodland bowers,
Rocks, and romantick cliffs, and towers,
Which lift their crests aloft, and throw
Rich umbrage on the flood below.

O who will bear me to the meads,
Where ISIS, classick river, leads
Her silver current, broad and fleet:
And CHERWELL glides hard by, to meet 500
Her course with narrow stream and slow?
There the bright WATER-LILIES blow,
Their stems with gorgeous blossoms crown'd,
'Mid shield-like leaves that float around.
There many an oar, with feathery play
Quick-glancing, on the dripping spray
Reflects the sunbeams: many a sail
Shines white before the bellying gale:
And mellow, o'er the water swells
The musick of thy pealing bells, 510

* See Gerard's Epistle Dedicatorie of his *Herbal* to Lord Treasurer Burghley.

O WYKEHAM, name rever'd! and nigh,
 His, who with graceful symmetry
 Rais'd the fair tow'r of MAGDALENE,
 In the clear crystal twofold seen,
 Rich pinnacle, with vane and fret;
 Window, and pannel'd parapet:
 And near, but with a graver air,
 Like mother by her daughter fair,
 Low MERTON, 'mid her tufted grove;
 And CHRISTCHURCH' Norman pile above 520
 The long line of her elm-trees tall,
 Her gatehouse tow'r, and window'd hall;
 And Attie RADCLIFFE's vaulted dome;
 And rising o'er my whilome home,
 My own lov'd GRIEL,—(though of grace
 But small to see to, yet in place
 Not mean 'mong OXFORD's, sons, nor slight
 Her honour;)—there of structure light
 Emerging from its cluster rich
 Of crocket, canopy, and niche, 530
 Corbel and statue, leaf and flower,
 That crown its decorated tower,
 With sculpture's elfin broidery graced,
 Itself with simple beauty chaste
 Ascends o'er buttress, nave, and choir,
 SAINT MARY's tall and taper spire.

Or who will bear me, where the WYE
 Deep 'mid her woodland scenery;
 And doubling like the volum'd snake,
 Winds onward her romantick track: 540
 By GOODRICH' hold, and KYMIN's hill,
 Augmented thence by that slow rill,

Which gives yon ancient town its name,
 Proud of its old HISTORIAN's fame,
 Proud of its MONARCH's, from the fort
 Surnam'd and field of AGINCOURT;
 To TINTERN's lofty-window'd fane
 Stript of each gorgeous storied pane,
 Her roofless, arch'd, and pillar'd nave;
 And PIERSFIELD's rocks, and woods that wave 550
 Impervious o'er the strait abyss,
 Sheer from the embattled precipice;
 And CHEPSTOW proudly looking down,
 Where tow'rd's his old romantick town
 WYE glides beneath his towered steep,
 Long terras'd wall, and tottering keep!

To please the mind with visions fair,
 To blunt the bitter sting of care,
 Such scenes possess a magick power;
 And once and more, for many an hour 560
 Of bliss, such bliss as here we know,
 To thee a debt of thanks I owe,

O MONMOUTH, and thy wandering WYE!
 With much besides, that memory's eye
 Still holds in wakeful trance; the scene,
 Where BLORENCE soars with lofty mien
 Abrupt from sweet GAVENNY's vale;
 And close LANTONY's abbey'd dale;
 And that star-pointing heath-clad CONE,
 'Mid the broad plain in grandeur lone; 570
 And SKYRRID's cloven pyramid;
 And by the creeping ivy hid,
 Baronial RAGLAN's portal'd wall,
 Her spacious courts, and stately hall,

Imperial CHARLES's lov'd resort,
 Tow'rs, bastions, moat, and massive fort.
 RAGLAN, whom storying scrolls record
 In concert with her loyal Lord,
 WORCESTER's good earl, who nobly dar'd,
 When ENGLAND like a caitiff far'd 580
 Crush'd by rebellion's iron wing,
 To love his Church and serve his King!
 And sure in history's living page,
 The records of a by-gone age,
 It glads the very heart to see
 Fast faith, and generous loyalty,
 Still uneduc'd, unterrified;
 And careless of all thought beside,
 Save to maintain the plighted vow,
 And bear untarnish'd on the brow, 590
 Howe'er by evil days beset,
 The BRITISH NOBLE's coronet!

Nor are those scenes without their share
 Of worth to such, as fain would bear
 From every pleasant spot a prize
 To swell their treasur'd herbaries.
 Bear witness thou, BELOVED CHILD!
 For whom each simple flowret wild,
 Ere yet thou knew'st to name its name
 With half-form'd speech, had pow'r to claim 600
 Thy love, surpassing vulgar toys;
 And still among thy youthful joys,
 Train'd by parental care, thy taste,
 By joint parental care, embraced

Each novel bloom, in season due,
 Which from her lap free nature threw :
 Nor now, when calls maternal, join'd
 With calls connubial, on thy mind
 The tasks of life mature impose,
 Fails't thou, if chance a stranger grows 610
 Thy path beside, soon strange no more
 To range it with thy floral store :—
 Bear witness thou, that not in vain
 We travers'd MONMOUTH's blooming reign,
 When bright JULY his radiance shed ;
 And many a flow'r, from nature's bed
 Cropt by thy hand, was taught to wear
 On thy portraying page the air,
 And form, and tints, which first it knew,
 When on its native spot it blew. 620

There still through winter's gloom I trace
 The form of many a summer grace :
 There the tall plant, whose yellow bloom
 Pale gold, and delicate perfume,
 Scenting the evening breezes, claim
 The honour of the Primrose' name,
 From gentle MONNOW's rushy bank :
 But whether MONNOW's rushes dank,
 Or rapid WYE, or BRITAIN's coast
 Can dare the EVENING PRIMROSE boast 630
 Indigenous, their native pride,
 Is doubt ; nor dares the Muse decide.
 There the blue BELL-FLOW'R OPEN SPREAD,
 Most rare ; and rare with double head
 The GIANT THROATWORT's bells of blue :
 The MEADOW CRANESBILL's purpler hue :

SOAPWORT, with blush of roseate tinge :
 The tube-like cup of green, and fringe
 Of blossom plaited manifold,
 The THORNY APPLE's milk-white hold ; 640
 White, but with purple tinge, as 'milk,
 Soft to the touch as orient silk :
 Of sorts, which ev'n botanick eye,
 Vers'd in its lov'd pursuit, may try
 In vain to mark, the scented MINT,
 Of many a varied form and tint :
 And CALAMINT, of kindred power :
 White CATMINT's crimson-spotted flower ;
 DWARF MALLOW ; purple BETONY ;
 With velvet leaf the MALLOW-TREE ; 650
 Red BURNET ; CUDWEED's cottony down ;
 The prickly CARLINE's golden crown ;
 Of form minute, complete in shape,
 The LEAST SNAPDRAGON's yellow gape :—
 Where KYMIN from his rocky brow
 Marks town, and mead, and stream below,
 And tempts the sauntering step to rove,
 Through the rich glades of BEAULIEU's grove,
 But if the hill a plant so rare
 Have bred, or only nourish'd there, 660
 I know not, girt with viscid rim,
 The PURPLE CATCHFLY's jointed stem :—
 The SHEPHERD's bristling STAFF erect :
 With purple blooms the TEASEL-deckt
 Center'd in an oval crown ;
 But not like him of more renown,
 Arm'd with the bended awns, that pull
 Through the close web the knotted wool,

Raise the soft downy nap, and smooth
 The texture with tenacious tooth ; 670
 Nor skilful art a tool has plann'd
 To match that gift of nature's hand :—
 And BROCMRAPE'S scaly spikes, around
 With tiers of helmed blossoms bound,
 Who plants his parasitick shoot
 Intrusive on a stranger root,
 And, fresh with life, presents to view
 The sapless oak leaf's dingy hue.

All these and more, whene'er I look
 Well-pleas'd on thy recording book, 680
 LOV'D DAUGHTER, of the days gone by,
 Past on the banks of wandering WYE,
 Memorials to my thought impart,
 There PICTUR'D by thy pleasing art.
 Delightful art, when meet combin'd
 The Botanist's inquiring mind,
 The Painter's plastick eye, and hand
 Obedient to the eye's command !
 Delightful art, to which the power
 Belongs, the perishable flower 690
 To save from imminent decay,
 Its form to other days convey,
 Fresh blooms to fading beauty give.
 And bid the wither'd figure live !
 For me, all inexpert to hold
 The limner's pencil, and unfold
 Sweet nature's rural charms to view,
 The worth I own of those who do :
 Well-pleas'd in portraiture to trace
 The features of the country's face, 700

And, when forbid the fields to roam,
To ponder these delights at home!

I said that June perchance might vie
With May in rich variety
Of novel blossoms, with delight
That paint the fields, and charm the sight.
With MANY a NOVEL BLOSSOM more,
Less copious, yet not small the store,
If duly scann'd will bright JULY
Reward the investigating eye. 710
Not so, to charm the listening ears,
Will nature's tuneful CHORISTERS
Fresh strains supply of rapture new:
And, as the month glides on, but few
With transport less alert sustain
The musick of their earlier strain.
What causes indistinct commence
To check the general confluence
Of voices from the feather'd throng,
Which swell'd the vernal tide of song? 720
Is it, the quickening breath of SPRING,
When all the world is revelling
As with new life, has lost its power,
Supplanted by the summer hour,
Which sinks in languor and in rest
The efforts of each buoyant breast?
Is it, the kindling flame of LOVE
Has ceas'd to answering warmth to move
The ardent tribes, that now no more
Against a rival's song they pour 730

The torrent of AMBITIOUS pride,
 Or COURTSHIP for the destin'd bride?
 Is it, no more, in all the height
 And fulness of the heart's DELIGHT,
 The brooding mate calls forth at hand
 Sounds of kind thought and passion bland,
 To cheer her wearisome employ, •
 And tell his own exuberant joy?

Whate'er we deem the immediate cause,
 Which gives effect to nature's laws, 740
 And with the season brings along
 The times of silence and of song;
 Full many a voice, which made to ring
 With ecstacy the groves of spring,
 Its part in that bright concert ends;
 Or through the MIDMOST YEAR suspends,
 Till the calm autumn's milder day
 Again awake the slumbering lay.

Long since the MISSEL ceas'd his song;
 Scarce one among the vernal throng; 750
 Apt with his stirring call to cheer
 The dulness of the infant year,
 But soon apart and mute he dwells,
 Nor e'er the general concert swells.

But like the Missel, many a bird,
 Long 'mid the general concert heard,
 Now ere July be well begun,
 Or when his middle course is run.
 The musick of the groves and fields
 To more enduring songsters yields. 760

Mute soon the CHANTER of the HEDGE:
 And he, who paints with yellow edge

His pinion's olive plumage green,
 Though now he break the silent scene
 With sharp quick trill, to July's end
 Will scarce that sharp quick trill extend.
 More prompt has ceas'd his carol light
 The CHAFFINCH, with bright bars of white
 Crossing his wings of velvet black :
 And, thinking of their southward track, 770
 The pilgrim gray with SABLE HEAD ;
 And he with TAIL and bosom RED ;
 And he, who on the wing his note
 Pours restless from his SILVERY THROAT.
 And where is he, sweet PHILOMEL,
 With rise and fall, and trill and swell,
 Melodious ? He the advancing year
 Forbears with strain prolong'd to cheer,
 And leaves with June the evening wood
 To silence as to solitude. 780

Unrivall'd by the general vote
 Is Philomel's melodious note :
 And favouring accidents agree
 To add to that sweet melody,
 By dint of rareness, time, and place, .
 A zest and adventitious grace. .
 But brief is Philomela's stay,
 A few short weeks : that liquid lay
 Nor earliest spring delights to hear,
 Nor dwells it on midsummer's ear, 790
 Like meteors in the evening sky,
 That charm with transient glance the eye.
 Bright visions in yon vaulted scene,
 But short their times, and far between.

And so, with more delight I greet,
 More welcome inmates, if less sweet,
 The merry LARK and THROSTLE gay :
 Not only of the dawning day,
 But heralds of the dawning year ;
 Who their rathe lay in winter's rear 800
 Sing blithe, and all the springtide long,
 And scarce suspend the summer song :
 Or, if suspended for a while,
 Reviv'd by autumn's milder smile
 The stream of harmony resume :
 Now and again midwinter's gloom
 Enlivening, till the brisker strain
 Proclaim the opening year again.
 Kind friends at hand, like friends indeed,
 To aid us in our hour of need ; 810
 And sure not dearly for their aid
 With food, and house, and home repaid !

And he, companion of the spring,
 The echo bird of vagrant wing,
 Whose voice, foregoing all pretence
 To charm with tuneful sound the sense,
 Yet by association wins
 The well-pleas'd mind, while it begins,
 And oft the self same note renews,
 'Mid nature's fairest sweetest views, 820
 Winging his flight from tree to tree ;
 "The plain song Cuckoo," where is he ?
 With trembling, hoarse, disjointed tune
 Of late he gave to parting June

Of coo-coo-coo his farewell cry:

But scarce a greeting to July

Of kind good-morrow waits to pay,

Already on his southward way.

I marvel how, from place to place,

Each various migratory race

830

TRUE to their BUDDING go and come!

As truly, as at beat of drum

The marshall'd soldiers' prompt array,

They strike their tents, and troop away:

Soon as that secret pow'r directs,

Which reason sees in its effects,

But further knows not to define;

That hidden voice, which gives the sign,

From the hot shores of southmost SPAIN,

Or sandy AFRIC's sun-bright reign,

840

To wing their vernal flight, or back

Retrace the autumnal southward track.

I marvel, its PECULIAR time

How each discerns, from clime to clime

The migratory wing to ply:

Some, while the summer sun on high

Yet keeps his hot and lustrous hold;

Nor yet the approaching winter's cold,

Nor autumn's milder reign betrays,

By weaken'd beams or waning days;—

850

Some, when the breath of autumn stains

The wood, and chills its sapless veins,

And the connecting passage shows

From summer's heat to winter's snows;—

Some, not till winter's steps appear

Advancing close on autumn's rear,

And night with more than equal sway
Holds conflict with declining day.

I marvel too, what potent cause
These by cognate attraction draws 860
To council, as the days advance;
And prompts them, ev'n to casual glance
The near approaching flight to tell,
By MARKS and SIGNS perceptible:
While others pass UNNOTIC'D hence,
Save by the more observant sense;
And, as they came at first, are gone
By stealth, in quiet, and alone.

Of late, the hedgerow path along,
The Cuckoo's oft repeated song 870
Amus'd our ear: perchance our sight
Was taken by his hurried flight.
Again we seek the accustom'd spot,
But now we see and hear him not.
The vanish'd form, the silenc'd tone,
Make his UNSEEN MIGRATION known.

Not so the BIRD of SHORTEST FEET,
And longest stretch of wing! Complete
The end which brought him to our shore,
The task of incubation o'er, 880
And firm and fledg'd his new-born twins;
He now in airy sport begins
To busk him for the approaching flight.
In gathering troops from morn to night,
With dart and wheel, with scream and squeak,
Which the heart's buoyancy bespeak,
Aloft amid the azure sky
Their pinions' rival speed they try;

Embracing in their daily play
 A space, might bear them on their way 890
 From Britain's isles to southmost Spain,
 The northern to the midland main,

So all prepar'd, the secret sign
 Obeying of the voice divine,
 Which speechless whispers to their breast,
 (The effect we see, but how imprest
 That secret sign we little know,
 Or what their moving cause to go;)
 Hence with the tempest's speed they start,
 The last to come, the first to part, 900
 Of all the swallow's fourfold race.

MAY saw them first in amorous chase
 Cleave with swift wing our British air:—
 JUNE on their close domestick care
 Mark'd them intent:—the well-fledg'd young,
 Now mixt their parent troops among,
 High in the liquid ether play:—
 And, long ere AUGUST's midmost day,
 Shall Britain on her southern shore
 Salute the pilgrim SWIFT no more. 910

What PROBLEMS, many an age involv'd
 In night, had man's experience solv'd,
 Could man have learn'd to mount the drift,
 And travel with the pilgrim SWIFT!
 Not then about the CENTRAL ZONE
 A cloud had ancient error thrown,
 As if the sun inflam'd the air
 Surpassing human life to bear:—
 Not then had AFRIC'S CAPE OF STORM
 Obscur'd so long its mountain form;

And stay'd its boundaries to reveal,
 Till plough'd by Lusitanian keel:—
 Not then had NILE his lurking SOURCE,
 Nor NIGER then his seaward COURSE,
 'Conceal'd, a monument to raise
 To Britain's sons these latter days.
 Such mysteries long had man descried,
 The Swift's accustom'd tracks his guide.

But harder problems than to show,
 With what degrees of fervour glow 930
 The beams of equatorial suns;
 Or to what length to pole-ward runs
 The southern cape; or where ascends
 Nile's bubbling stream, or Niger's ends;
 The wandering SWIFT himself supplies:
 How with unerring aim he plies
 His earlier and his later flight;
 By what nice sense, surpassing sight,
 Experience, reasoning thought combin'd,
 By what strange energy of mind, 940
 (If mind we dare that instinct call,)
 In one concurrent council all
 Impell'd, at stated seasons plan,
 Commence, complete their course; while man
 Alert to scrutinise the laws
 Of nature, and teach secret cause,
 Avows, beyond what meets the eye,
 Their motions-ill can he descry,
 Fain to refer the end, the road,
 The season, all to NATURE'S GOD! 950

And what, but NATURE'S GOD, his wealth
 Pours forth profuse; while, as by stealth,
 Unseen, we know not how, the earth
 With many a fast maturing birth
 Is mantled, and completes her part,
 To glad man's face, and cheer his heart?

On shady hills and woodland banks,
 Or the trim garden's cultur'd ranks,
 Half seen, in many-colour'd heaps,
 The granulated STRAWBERRY peeps 960
 Abundant from his leafy bed.

Blue BILBERRIES, WHORTLEBERRIES red,
 And scarlet CRANBERRIES' richer prize,
 Stain'd with the bright vermilion's dyes,
This oval, *those* of form globose,
 In heath, or moor, or peaty moss,
 Where bloom'd of late the shrub-borne bell,
 Now to their full siz'd ripeness swell,
 And moulded in the sugar'd paste
 Court with sharp zest the approving taste. 970

See, pendent from the branching bough,
 Of sanguine or empurpled glow,
 The clustering CHERRY's glossy balls.
 And studding thick the sunny walls,
 First of his luscious tribe to bear
 To ripeness in our northern air;
 Unshelter'd from the nipping cold,
 His fruit, now ripening into gold,
 With blush of roseate brown inrobes
 The APRICOT his pulpy globes. 980

From blades of blue-ting'd verdure rears
 The WHEAT, its sharp and swelling ears,

And its fresh green with change indues
 Day after day of richer hues,
 Till dipt in molten gold it seem,
 Stol'n from Pactolus' fabled stream.
 The bristling BARLEY'S purple bloom
 Waves in the gale its egret plume:
 Waved in the gale as lightly float
 The pendants of the bended OAT.

990

O'er its green stalks the FLAX-FIELD draws
 A meshy veil of azure gauze,
 So thick the scatter'd blossoms lie:
 Till every bright cerulean eye,
 As tir'd and studious of repose,
 The sun's receding splendour close;
 At morn their eyelids to unfold,
 And his warm rays again behold.

Green 'mid brown earth's alternate rows
 Its flow'rs the dark POTATO shows,
 With yellow cones appearing through
 Its wheel-like blossoms, white or blue.

1000

Round the tall pole tenacious sweeps
 The spiral HOP, and twisting creeps
 Aloft with hairy stalk, and weaves
 His scaly flow'rs 'mid rugged leaves.

Here stands, what lately blooming lent
 To passing gales' delicious scent,
 Erect the podded BEAN: and there
 The wing'd and many-blossom'd TARE
 To every friendly object clings
 With its lithe tendrils curling rings.
 And there the PEA, with pranked dices,
 In shape like painted BUTTERFLIES.

1010

That flit from flow'r to flow'r, and sip
 Metheglin from each nectar'd lip,
 Scarce bending to the touch; and play
 In the blue sky, and to the ray
 Of noontide shew their gleaming sails,
 Vesture all hues, and feathery scales.

1020

With fond anticipating hope,
 Presageful of the future crop,
 Each fruitful field the OWNER eyes,
 And triumphs in the expected prize.
 He too, the casual PASSER BY,
 To whom all nature's gifts supply
 Food for improving pleasing thought,
 He, with no selfish interest fraught,
 Exulting hails each promis'd boon;
 And feels it for the time his own;
 And lifts his heart to Him, whose hand,
 Still prompt in bounty to expand,
 Is fain the things he made to bless,
 And fills with food and joyfulness!

1030

O, 'tis a SIGHT the SOUL to CHEER,
 The promise of the fruitful year,
 When GOD abroad his bounty flings,
 And answering nature laughs and sings!
 He "for the evil and the good,"
 For them, who with heart's gratitude,
 And them, who thanklessly receive
 The blessings he vouchsafes to give,
 Bids from his storehouse in the skies
 "His rain descend, his sun arise*!"

1040

I love to see kind heav'n bestow
 Abundance on mankind below:
 Then chief, when 'tis bestow'd on ONE,
 Who lives not for himself alone,
 But, like the rich and fruitful ground,
 What he receives, disperses round, 1050
 In part to bless the sons of men ;
 And grateful gives a part again,
 Like incense-breathing fields, to rise
 In tribute to the bounteous skies.

Nor less I love to see the store
 Augmented of the LOWLY POOR ;
 By honest toil industrious wrought,
 By frugal care, and prudent thought,
 With peacefulness and heart's content,
 Which of the FOUNT of good, that sent 1060
 Life and its blessings, mindful, pays
 To Him the meed of thankful praise.
 And though to Him, who gives us all,
 The turf-built altar be but small,
 The offering there of little price ;
 And from that humble sacrifice,
 So the world deems, a trivial flame
 Ascending, though with heav'nward aim,
 With but a feeble light arise,
 And seek acceptance from the skies :— 1070
 I know not but as rich a scent
 That turf-built altar may present,
 Expressive of the heart's desire,
 That offering poor, and feeble fire,
 As grateful to the smell divine ;
 As, flaming on the golden shrine, .

Ten thousand hecatombs, and more,
In homage from the imperial store.

To ALL, what best his wisdom knows,
The bounty of our God bestows. 1080

From ALL, to whom a boon he gives,
But *most* from HIM, who *most* receives,

In acts below of peace and love,

In acts of praise to Him above,

He claims, of what he gives, a part:

From all at least a THANKFUL HEART,

Which, soaring on devotion's wing,

Up to the throne of NATURE'S KING

Itself in holy vision lifts,

And owns the GIVER in his gifts. 1090

AUGUST.

VER.

THE months not personally delineated by the ancient Romans. Uncertain periods of each month's recurrence. August then not capable of being defined by its produce. Evil corrected by Julius Cæsar. Our harvest month. Origin and date of the name . 1-58

Beauty of the harvest-field. The reapers. The binders. The shocks of sheaves. A part reserved by Providence. Kind precept of the Mosaick law. Calculated to produce mutual benevolence. Spirit of the precept still obligatory. The proprietor. The gleaner . 59-148

History of Ruth. Her filial affection for her mother-in-law. Her unconquerable attachment. Her gleaning in the harvest-field. The kindness of Boaz. Her marriage. Ruth an ancestress of the Messiah . 149-234

Few August Flowers. Grass of Parnassus. Marsh Felwort or Gentian. Marsh Gentian or Calaphian Violet. Autumnal Saffron or Crocus. Meadow Saffron or Colchicum. Blossom of the Meadow Saffron. Its seed-vessel, wonderfully secured . 235-306

General provisions for securing the seeds of plants. Different provisions. The Capsule. The Pod. The Legumen. Naked seeds of the Didynamious Class. Seeds of Compound flowers. The Berry. The flesh-covered Capsule. The Stone or Nut. The Cone. Variety of seed-vessels. Their curious formation . 307-466

The progress of the seed-vessel open to observation. The unfolding of the seed obscure. An opportunity for observation. Mode of rearing Oak plants in Hyacinth glasses. Apparatus. Suspension of the Acorn. Bursting

of the bud. The Root. The Tree. Passage for the stem. Tree fit for planting. Its possible future state. Oak described by Spenser. Sir Philip Sidney's Oak at Penshurst. Yardley Oak 467-620

Nobleness of the Oak. Examples of Oaks in full vigour: Great Oak of Panshanger; The Chandos Oak. In incipient decay, Lord Bagot's Park, near Litchfield; Fredville, Kent. In decline, Salcey Forest Oak; Meccas Park Oak; Shelton Oak; Bull Oak in Wedgenock Park; Greendale Oak; King Oak, Saver-nake Forest; Queen Elizabeth's Oak, Huntingfield; Gospel Oak, Stoneleigh; Cowthorpe Oak, Wetherby. The growth of the Oak, striking proof of divine power. Inference concerning the growth of the gospel . . 621-780

Singing birds generally silent in August. Late singers; Yellow Hammer, Goldfinch. Freshwater or sea birds. Sandpiper or Summer Snipe. Ring Dotterel or Sand Lark. Curlew 781-834

Fear's alarm-cry. The Hawk. Pursued by Swallows. Terror of the small birds. The Partridge. The domestick Hen. Contents of the Hawk's nest. Feeling of the tender heart. Apology for the Hawk. All creatures have their parts and uses. Universal prevalence of the divine will. The divine care for all . . 835-952

Falconry. The Hawk a mark of gentility. Favourite sorts. Skill in training. The Hawking party. The Hawk and the Heron. The Heron's defence. The Hawk's victory. The Heron, royal game . . . 953-1066

Falconry succeeded by fowling. Season for Grouse shooting. Moor-fowl, or red Grouse. White Grouse or Ptarmigan. His change of plumage. Black-cock, et extinct in the south. The Fowler's enjoyment. et conduct most agreeable to the divine will, and humanity 1067-1174

AUGUST.

SEEMS it not strange to them who know
The heathen's proneness to bestow
On all things in yon ambient sky,
In this fair earth, the depths that lie
Beneath, and in the girdling seas,
Their own appropriate deities;
And give each fancied name to wear
Its proper raiment, form, and air:—
Seems it not strange, as onward glides
The year in its quadruple tides, 10
That every *Season* should be known
Mark'd by its own peculiar crown,
Its own fit dress; that *Night* and *Day*
Should each be clad in its array
Appropriate, and its signs retain
In sculptor's gem and poet's strain;
But that, nor strain of poet's lyre,
Nor sculptur'd gem, in meet attire
Shows each successive MONTH array'd?—
As if such meet attire display'd, 20
How each due portion of the year
Might claim its proper character,
Assuming each its wonted suit
Of calm or storms, of flow'r or fruit.
And sooth 'twere difficult to say,
What were each MONTH's most fit array,

So changeful was the Roman place
 Assign'd it in the seasons' race
 By choice pontifical: that now
 The crown befitting AUGUST's brow, 30
 Of wheat or grape-impurpled vine,
 Might the next year more aptly twine
 SEPTEMBER's head with bright festoon,
 Or mingle with the curls of JUNE*.

That thus each month should have its post
 Unfix'd, in varying error tost,
 An ill the prudent JULIUS felt;
 Reform'd the yearly course; and dealt
 To each, as round the periods came,
 Its own unvarying season's claim: 40
 That now, if graphick art would each
 In form and guise appropriate sketch,
 AUGUST might ever shine in vest
 Of wavy gold resplendent drest,
 And ever wreaths his brow in fold
 From the ripe corn-field's ears of gold.

In order to accommodate the lunar to the solar year, the insertion of an intercalary month near the end of February, every second year, was left by Numa to the discretion of the Pontifices: who, by inserting more or fewer days, made the current year longer or shorter, and so transposed the months from their regular seasons. Cicero, in his epistle to Atticus, (ad x. sep. 17,) is understood to speak of the equinox as falling about the middle of May: and Suetonius, in his *Life of Julius* (c. 40,) represents the consequence of the disturbance to have been, that the harvest months did not occur in the summer, nor the vintage in autumn. The evil was corrected by Julius Cæsar.

But AUGUST was not then. The time,
 Number'd from vernal March, the prime
 And outset of the circling year,
 Sixth in the rotatory sphere,
 Was styl'd SEXTILIS: till to grace
 With trophy meet the monthly space
 Illustrious for his victories won, *
 Great JULIUS' more successful son
 Stamp'd his impress, and left its name
 An ensign of AUGUSTUS' fame;
 And AUGUST still delights to bear
 The imperial Roman's character.

50

'Tis a fair sight, that vest of gold,
 Those wreaths that AUGUST's brow infold!
 O, 'tis a goodly sight and fair,
 To see the FIELDS their PRODUCE bear,
 Wav'd by the breeze's lingering wing,
 So thick they seem to "laugh and sing;"
 And call the heart to feel delight,
 Rejoicing in that bounteous sight;
 And call the reaper's skillful hand,
 To cull the riches of the land!

60

'Tis fair, to see the REAPERS clasp
 The corn in their capacious grasp;
 The armful's close collected heap
 Sheer with the crooked sickle reap,
 And on the earth's rich bosom throw;
 Meanwhile along each prostrate row
 Their faithful partners close behind
 Track their advancing steps; and BIND,

70

With twisted wreaths of stalks new shorn,
 The bundles of the golden corn,
 Where rang'd in seemly guise appear
 The upright straw, the bending ear;

80

'Tis fair to see the farmer build,
 Now here now there, throughout the field
 With measuring eye correct, that leaves
 Fit space between, the number'd SHEAVES,
 In SHOCKS progressive! As he piles
 The still increasing heaps, with smiles
 He counts, and feels his heart run o'er
 With gladness at the growing store;
 But ill receiv'd, unless repaid
 With thankfulness to Him, who made
 His sun arise, his rain descend;
 And for the good, he deigns to lend,
 Reserves a part himself, decreed
 The STRANGER and the POOR to feed.

90

'Twas a KIND PRECEPT, in the CODE
 Oft deem'd severe, but such as show'd,
 Beyond all codes of mortal man,
 Throughout its moral laws a plan
 Replete with a benignant sense,
 And unrestrain'd benevolence;

100

'Twas a KIND PRECEPT, which forbade
 The child of Israel, when he laid
 His sickle to the loaded ear,

"The corners of his field" to clear
 O'ercurious, or with "riddance clean"
 "The gleaning of his harvest glean;"
 But charg'd him of his yearly store
 To leave a portion for "the poor,"

And stamp'd the precept with the sign
Imperial of the NAME DIVINE*.

110

Hence founded on the will and word
Preceptive of the Sovereign Lord,
Of Him, who being gave and soul
To each, the Father of the whole,
Feelings of MUTUAL KINDNESS sprang
And love fraternal; such as hang
Link upon link, and form a chain
Apt in its cincture to contain
The members, that in fragments lie
Apart, of man's society:

120

And taught men for the rich to care,
Whose welfare, poor themselves, they share;
Or for the poor, to whom they know
That love, if rich themselves, they owe.
And though to us that ancient LAW
Have lost its primal force, nor draw
Our acts within its strict behest,
It leaves its SPIRIT still imprest
Undying on the heart and mind;
And bids in worth, if not in kind,
Still "to the poor the corners" yield
And "gleanings of our harvest field."

130

And so, 'tis sweet to see expand
The wealthy OWNER's liberal hand,
In bounty from his gather'd store:—
Perchance to see the modest POOR,
With heedful step and watchful glance
Permitted o'er the tilth advance,

* Lev. xix. 9; xxiii. 22. Deut. xxiv. 19.

Pleas'd, and collecting what remains
 Neglected from the loaded wains:— 140
 Or haply, if with thoughtful mind
 Some wealthy BOAZ, good and kind,
 In pity for some gentle RUTH,
 Instruct the sheaf-collecting youth,
 Ungather'd ears to drop, and lay
 The handfuls in the damsel's way,
 Nor turn her from the shocks aside,
 Nor with reproofful greeting chide.

Who has not heard; that loves to trace
 The records of the HEBREW race, 150
 And in that ancient hallow'd scroll
 The tales of simple life unroll,
 Mark'd by the lively pen of truth;
 Who has not heard of virtuous RUTH?
 Who to her husband's mother, left
 Of all, of husband, sons bereft,
 With zeal of strong AFFECTION clave;
 Return'd her for the gift she gave
 Its worth, a daughter for a son;
 In her affliction merg'd her own; 160
 For her forsook her native land;
 And sought with her a distant strand,
 With tenderness almost above
 The yearnings of a daughter's love:
 Obedient in all things beside,
 Save that besought, she still denied,
 That sonless widow to disown,
 And leave her helpless and alone.

“Intreat me not thy side to leave!
Forbid me not to thee to cleave! 170
Whither thou strayest, I will stray;
And where thou stayest, I will stay:
Thy people only shall be mine;
No other God I’ll know but thine:
There, where thou diest, I will die;
And there insepulcher’d will lie:
The Lord do so, and more, to me,
If aught but death part me and thee!”

Who hath not heard, when want and wo
That mother well-belov’d brought low, 180
And caus’d her in her soul to feel
In her heart’s heart the bitter steel,
And mourn that she, whose name had been
NAOMI once, was MARA then:—
That mother well-belov’d to shield
From wo and want, the harvest field
How duteous RUTH unbidden sought,
And meekly with the gleaners wrought,
Nor felt it toil, nor thought it scorn,
A stranger in the land, from morn 190
To noon, from noon to twilight gray,
To bear the burden of the day,
If so she haply might abate
The sorrows of the desolate,
And in her cup, of bitter wo
Drops of refreshing comfort throw?

Who hath not heard, the duteous maid
How BOAZ’ mindful care repaid,
Her virtuous kinsman!—gave command,
To fill with corn the damsel’s hand; 200

Skreen'd her from harm; and bade abide
 Securely by his maidens' side:
 Gave her at noontide meal to share,
 And more, the reaper's simple fare;
 With words of greeting kind bespake,
 And praise for her affection's sake;
 And home return'd her, light of cheer;
 To glad her mother's heart, and hear
 Affection's willing task approv'd
 By the dear voice of her she lov'd, 210
 With thanks to God for kindness shed
 Both on the living and the dead?

Who hath not heard, how fair a spot
 Receiv'd that GENTILE maiden's lot,
 Whose heart-strings to her mother clave:
 How their kind kinsman BOAZ gave
 The alien's child advanc'd to dwell
 Among the wives of ISRAEL,
 In wealth and honourable rest,
 And by the GOD of ISRAEL blest:— 220
 How, above all her blessings, one
 Surpass'd in worth, a first born son:—
 How her lov'd mother, whose distress
 Had turn'd her joy to bitterness,
 Own'd, in the birth of that fair boy,
 Her bitterness was turn'd to joy:
 A son, by whom, in mercy dealt,
 Repair'd each former loss was felt;
 A son, ordain'd the future gem
 Of Jesse's root, and David's stem; 230
 From whom should spring the promis'd Seed,
 The Child of Abraham's race decreed,

Man's Blessing, God's incarnate Truth,
Sprung from the Gentile gleaner Ruth?

Fair is rich August's golden crown :
But FEW the blossoms *newly blown*,
In sort not many, few in kind, .
The year's fresh progeny you'll find,
To blend their colours and their breath
With glowing AUGUST's golden wreath. 240

Yet of those few are some may vie
With FLORA's fairest family,
In grace, if not in sweet perfume :
PARNASSIAN GRASS, with chalic'd bloom
And globes nectareous, like the earl's
Rich coronet, beset with pearls ;
Whose stamens, form'd with wondrous power
To fructify the impregnate flower,
Each after each their threads extend,
Each after each their anthers bend,
And on the germen's open head
The fertilising pollen shed, 250
And thence withdrawing backward trace
Their passage to their former place.

And, see, MARSH FELWORT bares to view
His wheel quintuple's brilliant blue,
CAMBRIA, thy pride ; if Cambrian coast
Indeed that native beauty boast !
Less apt to pay the searcher's cares,
Than that a kindred name that bears,
The beauty of the GENTIAN race :
Whose "gallant flow'rs with bravery*" grace 260

* Gerard. .

Or chalky down or meadow wet,
 The blue CALATHIAN VIOLET.
 And see, from out its purple lips
 Its orange pointal's pendent tips
 The AUTUMNAL SAFFRON's tubes disclose ;
 Nor brighter blossom England knows,
 If England may the Saffron claim :—
 And to the Saffron but in' name
 Akin, that proof of nature's care,
 By means stupendous, strange and rare, 270
 Mocking the thought of man, to breed
 And propagate the latent seed ;
 Styl'd from its wonted dwelling-place,
 The MEADOW SAFFRON's rival grace.

To Suffolk, where the abbey'd town
 Still keeps its martyr'd king's renown ;
 To Glo'ster springs salubrious go,
 Or where through Wor'ster pastures flow
 Broad Severn's waves ; or, swoln with rills
 That fall from Derby's rocky hills, 280
 Wild Darwent hastens to present
 His tribute to majestick Trent ;
 Or go to Monmouth's level meads,
 Where Wye the gentle Monnow weds :
 Long brilliant TUBES of PURPLE hue
 The ground in countless myriads strew.
 Anon, but brief the space between,
 No more those countless tubes are seen :
 The meads their verdant cloke resumè ;
 And, with that evanescent bloom, 290
 You deem perhaps its spirit fled,
 Abortive, virtue-less, and dead.

You deem amiss. Within the breast
 Secure of parent earth, the CHEST,
 That holds the embryo FRUIT, is laid:
 Thither, by that long tube convey'd,
 Safe from the force of wintry skies
 Conceal'd the buried virtue lies.
 Till spring-tide from the fostering earth
 Shall wake the meditated birth, 300
 The germen on its stalk display'd,
 And with embracing leaves array'd:
 And when the vernal grasses' bloom
 Shall spread the hayfield's rich perfume,
 Bright JUNE mature in timely hour
 The seeds of AUGUST's early flower!

What secret pow'r, mysterious skill,
 Still varying, but successful still,
 With what profound forecasting views,
 Of nice design, does nature use, 310
 From the bright blossom'd FLOW'R to breed,
 Augment, secure the ripening SEED:
 The ripen'd seed to bring to birth,
 That, trusted to the nurturing earth,
 Each may fulfill its part assign'd;
 And each, according to its kind,
 Bring forth again in season due
 Stem, branch, and leaf, and blossom new,
 Fraught with the embryo seed again;
 That nature's wheel may still maintain 320
 Incessant its prolifick course;
 When time was born, by sovereign force

Imprest of laws secure and fast,
And still, while time shall live, to last!

Succeeding to the vacant room,
Where flourish'd late the painted bloom,
Strange forms of differing shape and size
The inquiring eye delight, surprise!

Whether the CAPSULE's jointed chest
Its store with order just invest 330
In angular or globe-like hold;
Sole, or in chambers manifold
Arrang'd, within their homes decreed,
The separate families of seed;
So swells the FLAX his rounded boll:
So, perforate with lateral hole,
Through which from their retreat within
The seeds a thoroughfare may win,
Extend the THROATWORT's jointed cells;
And so the pretty PIMPERNELS 340
Secure their ripening treasure hid
Beneath a well-compacted lid;
And POPPY his, within a cope
Of oval balls obtuse, which ope
A range of circling valves, around
His disk with rays converging crown'd:—

Whether the CRUCIATE FLOW'ER his POD
Contract, of figure short and broad;
As CANDYTUFT, compressed and round,
A shield with circling border bound, 350
And SHEPHERD'S PURSE, the counterpart,
In shape, of an inverted heart;
Or stretch his vessel, slim and tall,
Like that which clothes the scented WALL,

Or that whose blossoms "silver white
Painted the meadows with delight:"—

Whether the BROOM or flaunting PEA,
Robed in its insect drapery
Of banner broad and balanc'd wings,
Aside its fluttering raiment flings, 360
And from the keel's expanding bloom
Shoots lengthening forth the full LEGUME:—

Whether beneath embowering HELM,
Not like their brethren in the realm
Of nature, who their growing race
Safe in the capsule's folds embrace,
The curv'd and casque-like flow'rs above
O'erarching form a pent-house cove,
Nor aught of treasure-house below
Save in the tube-shaped CHALICE know, 370
Defensive of their four-fold seeds;
Such BUGLE, ALLHEAL, SELFHEAL, weeds
In the green pasture, MINT and BAUM,
ARCHANGEL, and sweet MARJORAM,
And sweeter, THYME, whose fragrant head
Bends to the climbing traveller's tread:—

In all-boon nature seems to try
Profuse a strange variety;
All curious to the inquiring mind,
All apt to work the end design'd: 380
And still, as onward still we range,
She strikes us with perpetual change.

On single stem, the FEATHERY DOWN
All radiate, in a central CROWN
Collected, with a globe-like ball
Surmounts the staff of GOATSBEARD tall:

Like-fashion'd, less of lofty place
 Ambitious, claim congenial race
 HAWKWEED and COLTSFOOT; LION'S TOOTH,
 Amusive toy of early youth; 390
 GROUNDSEL and THISTLE, oft despis'd,
 But by the pretty Goldfinch priz'd:—
 How many ray-like *florets* bloom,
 To grace the germen's common room,
 So many *seeds* their feathery robe
 Unite to form that central globe;
 Thence lightly floating on the gale,
 Free nature's denizens they sail,
 Fain, where a favouring spot they find,
 To plant and propagate their kind. 400

Imbedded in their pulpy coat,
 Loose in the juicy BERRY float
 The ROSE and CORNEL's naked seeds;
 And WOODBINE's, with translucent beads
 In rings of crowded clusters strung;
 And CURRANT's, in thick bunches hung
 Dependent; and in many a head
 Diffuse the tufted HAWTHORN's spread.
 There lurk the naked seeds within
 The juicy pulp, and glossy skin: 410
 His glossy skin the berry shows
 Bright green at first; but ripening glows,
 Still varying to the watchful eye,
 With scarlet, black, or purple die.
 In soft and PULPY COAT array'd,
 But each in CASE interior laid
 Of twofold MEMBRANE, like the skin
 Drèst from the sheep, opaque and thin,

Their seeds the roseting'd APPLES bear,
Red SERVICE, and the dull green PEAR. 420

Still in soft pulp and girdling rind,
Nor less in inner coat confin'd
Of STONELIKE fence impervious, grow
The CHERRY red and purple SLOE.
Without the pulp, in fortress shut *
Well guarded, grows the hazel NUT:
And like the nut in lonely cell,
Though not like it in harden'd shell,
But mantled with a LEATHERN CLOAK,
The kernel of the lordly OAK. 430

While tiers of solid scales, that lap
Each over each, and closely wrap
Their offspring in a strict embrace,
The embryos of a future race,
To form the shapely CONE combine,
The seed-chest of the waving PINE.

Such various forms will meet your eye,
If, fond of nature's works, you try
Inquisitive her floral store;
And on each curious method pore 440
Of unexhausted skill, to breed,
To lodge, and guard the ripening seed.
And haply though the flow'r dispense
More pleasure to the admiring sense
Of those who note the expanding bloom,
And taste its redolent perfume:
I know not but the observant mind
At least may equal pleasure find,
The SEED CHEST's gradual growth to mark;
As, wrought in nature's workshop dark, 450

By slow degrees from day to day,
 From hour to hour, it works its way,
 From a mere speck, a jot, a point;
 Till form'd each chamber, valve, and joint,
 Without, within; howe'er minute
 At first, the swoln and ripen'd fruit
 The cearments, which their trust inclose
 In their dark caverns, open throws,
 By elemental aid disjoin'd,
 The solar heat, the breathing wind, 460
 The influence of the dropping sky;
 And forth the seeds are lanc'd to try,
 Where favouring chance may fix the scene,
 Their fortune in this wide terrene,
 And, nurs'd by nature's genial cares,
 Raise like themselves successive heirs.

They're open to the general view:
 And he, who wills it, may pursue
 Observant from the natal hour,
 Which wakes to life the budded flow'r, 470
 To that, when drooping in decay
 Each faded flow'r is past away,
 And bloomless leaves the plant and bare;—
 Yes, he who will may follow there
 Progressively the STEPS that lead
 To perfectness the increasing SEED:
 Till, bursting from its parent case,
 And scatter'd by the feather'd race,
 By insect, reptile, beast, or man,
 Co-labourers in nature's plan, 480

Or wafted by the passing wind,
 At once a refuge meet it find,
 A tomb within the shrouding earth,
 And cradle for the future birth.

LESS OBVIOUS to the inquiring sight,
 Hid in the earth and gloomy night,
 His trust the SEED begins UNFOLD;
 Till issuing from that secret hold,
 The plant his gradual form displays,
 And courts unveil'd the publick gaze.

490

But would you wish commenc'd to see
 The process of that mystery,
 Pause for a moment, nor refuse
 Your kindly hearing, while the Muse
 Would fain a pleasing sight rehearse,
 Yet unessay'd in measur'd verse;
 Nor yet essay'd, if right she knows,
 Save by herself in humbler prose.

Half from the living spring be fill'd
 A CRYSTAL VASE, like those that yield,
 To deck the polish'd female's room,
 The HYACINTH'S precocious bloom.
 The vessel's narrowing neck to guard,
 Be fitted there a rounded CARD;
 And thence, on slender PACKTHREAD slung,
 Or shred of BRAZEN WIRE, be hung
 The OAKTREE'S shell'd and kernel'd CORN,
 Which, at the end inferior borne
 Of that dependent line, around
 The acorn's swelling body wound,

500

510

May dangle mid the crystal vase,
 Above the water's limpid face:
 Prompt to amuse the watchful eye,
 And with strange sight diversify,
 The dulness of the wintry gloom;
 And station'd, where the attemper'd room,
 The accustom'd dwelling place, may hold
 Its trust secure from nipping cold.

Then, as the trickling vapour glides
 About the vessel's moisten'd sides, 520
 Soon from the tapering acorn's end
 You'll mark the liquid drop depend.
 Nor long, a few brief days between,
 Cleaving its hard and shelly skreen
 Will first peep out the expansive BUD;
 And through the narrow cleft protrude
 All colourless the slender root,
 Which downward, with elongate shoot,
 Shall through the genial liquid pass;
 And snakelike, mid the girdling glass 530
 To right, to left, its fibres throw
 Excursive o'er the pool below.

Anon with rival vigour, see
 Ascend the rudimental TREE,
 Unfolded from the twin-born gem!
 The twofold leaf at first; the stem
 Diminutive, which upward tends,
 And from each side progressive sends
 Fresh leaves in pairs alternate spread:
 Till, taller grown, the aspiring head 540
 Its narrow house indignant spurns;
 And for your friendly succour years,

To cut its penthouse roof away,
And bare it to the open day.

Now pierce the obstructing cope, and grant
Free PASSAGE for the aspiring PLANT,
Forth from his shallow hold to soar.

See by degrees, a foot and more
Relcas'd the leafy top ascends ;
And still, as on the shoot extends, 550
And onward, from the shelly sheath
Responds the fibrous root beneath ;
Prepar'd when wintry frosts their hold
Have loosen'd on the harden'd mould,
To take his post abroad ; to clasp
The soil with firm tenacious grasp ;
The tempest's furious force defy,
Lift his aspiring summit high,
Around his spreading branches throw,
And, shaken more, the firmer grow. 560

And who can say, but that SMALL TREE,
Which now in earliest infancy,
Weak as yon thread, its first-born sprig
Puts forth, a slender seedling twig,
May hold its course from stage to stage ;
May yet in some far distant age
To lonely musing poet yield
Its shadow brown, impervious shield
Against the sun's meridian stroke,
Like MILTON's "monumental oak*!" 570
Or like that monarch of the green,
The goodliest of the woodland scene,

" With body big, and strongly pight,
 Deep rooted, and of wondrous height,
 With arms full strong and large display'd,
 But of his foliage disarray'd*,
 Which still survives the tooth of time,
 And lives in that sweet poet's rhyme ;
 Who, while to please the courtly throng
 He " moralis'd" his faery " song" 580
 With " faithful love and furious war,"

No less the RURAL CALENDAR
 Deign'd in the humble shepherd's weed
 To picture with his pastoral reed,
 Sweet SPENSER!—Or like that which shades
 Delightful PENSEURST's classick glades,
 There fix'd to mark the natal hour
 Of Spenser's friend, in hall or bow'r
 Unrival'd, valiant, learned, free,
 Courteous, and good: whose honour'd tree 590
 In learned JONSON's verse remains,
 And softer WALLER's graceful strains,
 Most honour'd for its birthright claim
 To bear the gallant SIDNEY's name!—
 Or like that relick of the wood,
 In YARDLEY's sylvan solitude,
 Which seem'd to lend a listening ear,
 While COWPER's plaintive Muse severe
 In " melancholy Jaques'†" vein
 Pour'd forth her moralising strain : 600
 And backward traced the aged tree,
 Through time's eventful history,

* Spenser ; *Shepherd's Calendar*.

† Shakespeare ; *As you like it*.

From his last stage of drear decay,
 The evening of his closing day,
 Up to his full meridian time,
 His lusty morn, his joyous prime,
 His feeble childhood; when at first
 The twofold lobes the seedling burst,
 Ev'n as the slender form, which late
 Surpassing scarce a feather's weight, 610
 Was from its mighty parent shed,
 And dangles on yon fragile thread!

Yes, YARDLEY'S OAK was once like thee,
 Thou slender, weak, incipient Tree!
 And frail as is thy substance, thou
 May'st be like Yardley's relic now,
 When o'er thy scath'd and cloven head
 Their frosts a thousand years have shed;
 As mighty in thy strength of day,
 As graced and reverend in decay! 620

Look nature's green creation through,
 What nobler object glads the view,
 Than scatheless by the woodman's stroke,
 "The unwedgeable and gnarled OAK*,"
 Which, AUGUST, decks thy scenes, array'd
 In all the majesty of shade?

Whether in YOUTH, or MANHOOD'S prime,
 He lift his stately head sublime,
 And spread his branching arms abroad,
 Low bending with their leafy load: 630
 So tall, so broad, the mighty tree,
 Which mid PANSHANGER'S scenery,

* Shakespeare; *Measure for Measure*.

The lordly COWPER's proud domain,
 Waves o'er the green and grassy plain,
 Exulting in his shapely height,
 His arch'd and feathery foliage light :
 So, broader and with denser shade,
 Star-proof, pavilioning the glade,
 That star nor sun with chequering ray
 Can penetrate that dense array, 640
 Known by thy honour's second claim,
 Thy oak, most noble BUCKINGHAM,
 Thy CHANDOS oak, the grace and crown
 Unmatch'd of pleasant MICHENPON ;
 Which with wide arms, and branches bent,
 And curtain'd, like some giant tent,
 About its area's peerless bound,
 Sweeps with deep fringe the girdled ground :—

Or, if INCREASING YEARS begin
 O'er the reluctant frame to win 650
 A slight success, and in its course
 Check the fresh sap's ascending force :
 So, 'mid his sons of fresher growth,
 Fresh in the lustihood of youth,
 And plants of thy ingenuous care,
 Much honour'd BAGOT, here and there,
 Though proudly still he lift his brow,
 Some earlier sire appears to show,
 Dismantled of his leafy spray,
 The symptoms of a first decay : 660
 So stand in FREDVILLE's sylvan chase,
 Each with his own peculiar grace,
 All with a common worth indued,
 The threefold brethren of the wood,

Where "Stateliness" and "Beauty" vie
 To share the prize with "Majesty ;"
 The goddesses of arms and love
 Match'd with the fabled queen of Jove :—

Or if, in manhood's LATE DECLINE,
 "When now the gray moss mars his rine,
 When his bare boughs are beat by storms,
 His summit bald and plough'd by worms,
 His grace decay'd, his branches scere* ;"
 Still marks of dignity appear,
 Like silvery locks, which time hath shed
 On some age-honour'd Patriarch's head.

Such 'mid the flush of berried thorns,
 That SALCEY'S verdant woods adorns,
 The antique trunk's still sprouting shell,
 Whose wide and excavated cell,
 Wreath'd with fantastick branches bare,
 Yields the tall deer a welcome lair :—

Such Herefordian MOCCAS', nigh
 The windings of the pastoral Wye,
 Within whose cave for refuge creep
 In days of peace the pastur'd sheep,
 Where, round its then uninjur'd root,
 Hand strove with hand, and foot with foot,
 And nature heard with deep-drawn sighs
 The rival roses' warrior cries :—

Such SHELTON'S, once the look-out tower,
 So fame reports, of wild GLENDOWER,
 Impatient for the Hotspur's host ;
 What time on Severn's sedgy coast

* Spenser ; *Shepherd's Calendar*.

By SHREWSBURY'S temples floated wide
 The royal Henry's banner'd pride ;
 And thence still seen, by Severn's stream,
 Thy tow'rs and spires, fair SHREWSBURY, gleam,
 As fresh from deep Langollen's vale
 The eyes broad England's meadows hail:— 700

Such WEDGENOCK'S, whose time-hollow'd bole
 Has twenty swains, as with a stole,
 Inclos'd; and in that cavern'd round
 The ox a spacious stall has found:—

Such GREENDALE'S tall and trunk-form'd arch,
 Through which a banner'd host might march,
 And in its shade, itself a wood,
 Two hundred shelter'd kine have stood:—

Such SAVERNAKE'S majestick tree,
 Bearing the style of royalty; 710
 And HUNTINGFIELD'S, which mindful fame
 Stamps with ELIZA'S regal name,
 And tells of Hunsdon's princely courts,
 Tree-pillar'd hall, and woodland sports,
 And walks, and bow'rs, and buck laid low
 By arrow from the queenly bow:—

Such in lone STONELEIGH'S coppic'd lea,
 The "holy oak, the Gospel tree;"
 Where duly, as the village throng,
 Paced their parochial bounds along, 720
 The Priest in words of peace and love
 Told of the God who reigns above,
 With blessings for the earth's increase;
 And still the relick breathes of peace:—

Such first in size, if last in place,
 The giant of that giant race;

Though scant in summer leaves array'd;
 But casting with its trunk a shade,
 Twice twenty men it claims to hold
 Within that trunk's capacious fold; 730
 COWTHORPE, thy venerable boast!
 Nor England from her forest host
 Of worthies can produce a son,
 To match this woodland chief; nor one,
 Who dares to loftier praise aspire,
 Than children round a patriarch sire*!
 'Twere wonder less in days of yore,
 Unlighten'd by celestial lore,
 If with innate corruption blind,
 To superstition prone, the mind 740
 The stately oak's age-honour'd tree
 Held consecrate to Deity,
 And with obscure devotion felt,
 That there the present Godhead dwelt.
 Much more I wonder, in the days
 When pure religion lends her rays
 To lighten reason, if the mind,
 To senseless^o unbelief consign'd,
 Or cold indifference, can see
 The slender seed, the stately tree; 750
 And not, by faith upborne, her flight
 Essay beyond the realms of sight,
 Far off the PRIMAL CAUSE revere,
 And cry, "The hand of God is here!"

* For portraits, and many curious particulars, of the Trees named above, reference may be had to Strutt's *Sylva Britannica*.

Yes: guided by himself to know
 God in his works display'd below,
 Here on his earth the outward signs,
 Whereby his glorious Godhead shines,
 His own seen handywork we own;
 Then yonder on his unseen throne 760
 Seek him with faith's enlighten'd eye,
 And there "the Invisible" descry*.
 But who would here contented pause?
 Who, once induc'd effect and cause
 To balance, can forbear the thought?
 "If, through his works of nature taught,
 Proof of the NAME DIVINE we see,
 Who from the seed produc'd the tree,
 Effect so grand from cause so slight:
 Whose was the wisdom and the might, 770
 Which sow'd the gospel seed minute,
 And in its season gave to shoot
 A mighty tree; and bade it stand
 The centre of the thirsty land,
 And lift unblench'd its stately form,
 Despite the rage of time and storm;
 Where all the fowls of heav'n might flee,
 And in its branching canopy
 Securely build the shelter'd nest,
 And dwell in safety and in rest! 780

' Murm' now the voice of tuneful song!
 The swelling throat, the quivering tongue,

* Heb. xi. 27.

Their sounds of joyousness forbear:
 Though countless pinions brush the air,
 And ceaseless thread the leafy tree,
 Mute is the wonted minstrelsy;
 And wrapt alike of old and young
 In silence that promiscuous throng:
 Too youthful *these* to pour the note
 Of rapture from the feeble throat; 790
Those all unmindful of the power,
 Which in the spring's inspiring hour
 Thrill'd the brisk veins with love or glee,
 And tun'd the voice to ecstasy.

Save that the bird, his GOLDEN CROWN
 Who marks with arched STREAKS of BROWN,
 Will tell at times his amorous tale
 With hurried trill and plaintive wail:
 Or the gay FINCH of GOLDEN wing
 Attune his little pipe, to sing 800
 Perch'd on the thistle's downy head,
 That waving shades his consort's bed,
 His sprightly madrigal of love:
 Most late the nestling cares to prove;
 Among the last his feather'd brood
 To usher from their trim abode,
 Among the latest to prolong
 In AUGUST's ear his lively song.

Nor is the air from musick free
 Of such as by the briny sea, 810
 In SOUND or CREEK their pastime take,
 RIVER or pebble-margin'd LAKE.
 Here hurrying by, on foot and wing,
 With his barr'd tail's elastick spring,

From snowy breast the plaintive pipe
 Sounds clearly of the SUMMER-SNIPE.
 There with white throat and gorget dark,
 Bird of the shore, the DOTTREL LARK
 With sharp brisk cry and whistle shrill
 From his half-black, half-orange bill, 820
 Skims skirtingly the porous sand,
 For what of food the barren strand
 Has from the depths of ocean won:—
 There in short flights they flit or run,
 And, as the tide with curling waves
 Laves their quick feet, or well-nigh laves,
 Pick from the edge the crawling prey,
 And twittering shun the whelming spray.
 Nor wants there oft more shrill and loud,
 Where o'er yon beach that living cloud 830
 Hovering alights on dappled wings,
 Or upward from the banquet springs
 Piping their gathering cry anew,
 The watchnote of the dark CURLEW.

But OTHER SOUNDS than those of love,
 And other sounds than such as move
 The heart to sympathetick joy,
 The air's tranquillity destroy.

Hark! 'tis quick FEAR'S ALARUM CRY!
 See from yon eyry, where on high 840
 She fix'd her rudely-built nest,
 Or in a stranger's home, possess'd
 Erewhile by pie or plundering crow,
 Preferr'd her future race to stow;

Intent to seize the bleeding food
Defenceless, for her nestling brood
Carnivorous, clamouring for their prey,
The HAWK rapacious wings her way!

See, as she skims the cornfield low,
Or skirts the hedge's thorny row, 850
There where his smooth and glossy leaves
Of arrowy shape the BINDWEED weaves,
With bells of milky white intwin'd:
And with those milkwhite bells combin'd,
In gay festoons aspiring reach
The blossoms of the purple VETCH,
And bending by the watery mead
The BULLRUSH waves his club-like head;
The watchful SWALLOW notes her flight,
And with his clarion sharp to fight 860
Calls all his kindred tribes around!

Responsive to the alarm sound,
His kindred tribes assail the foe,
With voice and pinion, scream and blow,
Down darting fierce; then mounting high
Abrupt her baffled rage defy,
Till frustrate of her fated prey
The indignant plunderer sails away.

Meanwhile within the rustling brake
The LITTLE BIRDS more timorous quake, 870
Faint, and as if by magick charm
Disabled, at that dread alarm;
Nor dare they brook, nor can they fly,
The enchantment of that gorgon eye,
Whate'er selected victim chance
To meet its paralysing glance.

As in a dread and feverish dream
Beset with threatening foes, we seem
To strive, but strive in vain, to flee:
Lost in the fruitless strife, the kneec 880
Fails of its wonted strength unstrung,
And fails the inarticulate tongue,
While murmurs indistinct disclose
The labouring bosom's painful throes.

But in the cornfield's waving shade
The cowering PARTRIDGE lurks afraid,
With beating heart and upcast eye:
And with affliction's bitter cry
And restless step, the HOUSEHOLD HEN
Loud cackling to the sheltering pen 890
Her scatter'd chicks recalls, and flings
O'er the close mass her ruffled wings.

Ah! fatal cause have they to know
Their peril from that ravening foe!
Scale, if you can, her place of rest:
There remnants of their former feast
You'll haply find dispers'd among
Her yet unfledg'd rapacious young:
Of every weak defenceless brood
The ravish'd nestlings; steep'd in blood 900
Plumes 'mid the dying victim's moans,
Half-eaten forms, and fleshless bones.

It seems a RIGHTEOUS SENSE, of kind
And good, and merciful combin'd,
Which from the beak'd and talon'd bird,
Rapacious of the feebler herd,

And joying in her bloody spoil,
Bids the unhardened heart recoil!

But let the BLAMELESS HAWK go free
From charge of wanton cruelty;

910

If all unconscious of offence,

And prompted by the instinctive sense,

Fix'd and inherent in her frame,

To answer hunger's craving claim;

She takes, with nature for her guide,

The boon, which nature's cares provide,

Her proper food. Nor see I why,

If on the worm, the slug, the fly,

To whom a sense by bounteous heaven

Of pleasure and of pain is given,

920

Of life and death, with little heed

The birds of pow'r inferior feed;

These should not in their turn supply

To their strong brethren of the sky,

With pow'rs surpassing theirs indued,

Their staff of life, their needful food.

ALL fill their PARTS in nature's plan:

ALL have their USES in their span

Of brief existence; to our sight

Though of those uses some in light

930

Stand forth distinct, some dimly shown,

Some veil'd in darkness, which the throne

Of GOD incircles! ALL fulfil,

Whate'er it be, the SOVEREIGN WILL:

For ALL he CARES, that every kind

Hold, as he wills, its place defin'd;

That none, its race exhausted, fail;

That none its measure in the scale

Of life surpass ; that all, that each,
 Its rank in nature's muster reach. 940
 His wisdom trains the HAWK to fly,
 And teaches where her wings to ply* :—
 He bids the EAGLE mount, and dwell
 High on the rocky pinnacle,
 Far off descri^e the battle plain,
 And speed to revel on the slain† :—
 He bids her YOUNG suck up the blood :—
 Provides the RAVEN with his food,
 As famish'd here and there he flies,
 And listens to his nestlings' cries‡ : 950
 He from afar the SWALLOW calls§,
 And marks it, when a SPARROW falls|| '

Time was, in pleasures of the FIELD
 The HAWK no common station held :
 Join'd with the horse and dog of chase
 She mark'd the *man* of *gentle* race.
 So generous LANE, when WORCESTER fight
 Had crown'd the wrong, and crush'd the right,
 True to the weak but virtuous side,
 Rode forth his sovereign's guard and guide,
 About his feet his spaniels bland,
 His FALCON on his gallant hand¶.

* Job xxxix. 26.

† Ver. 27-30.

‡ Job xxxviii. 41.

§ Jer. viii. 7.

|| Matt. x. 29.

¶ Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, vol. iii., p. 418, edit. 1731 : which contains an engraving, representing the scene mentioned above.

Nor than the MERLIN on the fist,
 And buckled to the shapely wrist,
 Did seemlier ornament proclaim
 The presence of the *high-born dame*.

'Twas work for science then to choose
 Meet tenants for the well-stock'd mews:—
 The GOSHAWK, train'd for quarry bow,
 More short of wing, of speed more slow; . 970
 Of form a swifter flight to bear,
 The MERLIN, bird of lady fair;
 KESTREL, whose hovering wings defy
 The ruffling gale; the HOBBY's eye,
 Keen as the fiery lightning's ray;
 TARCEL, and GENTIL FALCON gray,
 Most apt of all the rapid kind
 To soar, and leave the sight behind:
That male, but *this* of female sex;
 Supreme with peerless might to vex, 980
 And down the appointed quarry bring;
 Of form more large, more fleet of wing.

Nor trivial was the FALCONER'S PART,
 By physick, diet, skillful art,
 From lawless habits to reclaim
 Of untaught nature wild, and tame
 These restless tenants of the wood:—
 Involv'd within the shrouding hood,
 To check the roving eye; to dress
 The leg with the tenacious jess, 990
 And train them to the wonted hand;
 Teach them to know and heed command,
 On the rous'd quarry dart away,
 Nor down the wind inglorious stray,

Nor scorn the homeward lure ; to tell
 Their movements by the tinkling bell ;
 And quick return from holt or hill,
 True to their guardian's whistle shrill.

Then might you see the antique hall,
 Compliant with the falconer's call, 1000
 Pour forth its tenants young and old,
 Highborn and menial, to behold
 The HAWK's and HERON's airy strife,
 The prize the conquer'd champion's life.

So sallying from the arch-way gate,
 With hat and plume in highborn state
 The damsel fair on palfrey light,
 On prancing steed the courteous knight,
 In suits of Kendal green array'd
 Troop to the sport the cavalcade. 1010
 Afoot the joyous sport to share,
 The humbler denizens repair ;
 Nor the swinkt villagers refrain
 To join the gay patrician, train.

See from the lake the HERON rise !
 At once unjess'd, unhooded, flies
 Intent the quarry's course to balk,
 Swift as the wind, the soaring HAWK.
 Now up, and up, and up she springs ;
 Nor less the HERON strains his wings, 1020
 With purpose each to gain on high
 The ascendant of the upper sky :
 Nor fears the HERON, safe above,
 His foe's abated force to prove ;
 Nor hopes the HAWK with stroke to smite
 Effectual from a lower height.

THE HERON'S DEFENCE

'Tis done: the first contention's o'er!
See, see, the HAWK superior soar!
See, downward she directs the blow.
Descending on her game below,
Not vanquish'd yet! Resisting still
His neck he doubles; and his bill
Projects behind the spreading wing,
Prepared to meet the rapid fling
Of the down-rushing foe; prepar'd
At once his vital parts to guard,
And on that piercing point below
Greet in full tilt the assailing foe.
So on the steel-fenc'd line the force
Bears on of the descending horse:
So to the horse in swift descent
Their spikes the steel-fenc'd line present.

1049

Now, FALCON, aim thy stroke aright,
To crush the wing, and mar the flight
Defensive, of thy destin'd prey;
Till, vanquish'd in the mortal fray,
He sink beneath thy talon's wound,
And strike with flapping wing the ground!

Now, HERON, on thy pointed bill
Receive, thy only chance, and drill
With thy keen weapon home address
The fierce assailant's naked breast!

In vain, the FALCON's well-aim'd stroke
Has first the spreading pinion broke:
The next with keener force has shred
In twain the unprotected head:
Nor mantling plume, nor flowing crest,
Can that resistless pounce arrest.

Vanquish'd he falls. The gazing crowd,
 With upcast eyes, and clamour loud, 1060
 Exulting hail the victim's fall;
 And lifeless to the lordly hall,
 Fruit of the sport, the ROYAL GAME
 Is borne in triumph home, to claim,
 To swan or peacock next in place,
 The banquet's sumptuous board to grace.

But times are chang'd. No longer drest,
 And serv'd to grace the sumptuous feast,
 His rank the heron holds: no more
 The hawk by art is train'd to soar, 1070
 The heron's foe. The garland now,
 Which deck'd erewhile the falconer's brow,
 Is by the rival FOWLER won;
 The hawk has yielded to the GUN.

And now's the season to begin
 The FOWLER's envied meed to win.

In northern ENGLAND'S uplands wild,
 Or where the Cambrian mountains, piled
 Height upon height, with heathery bed
 Immixt their rifted valleys spread; 1080
 In ERIN'S mountain bogs; but most
 Romantick SCOTLAND'S moorland boast,
 Where the thick mantled waste, beneath
 The blossoms of the tufted heath,
 At once repose and food supplies,
 Mix'd with the purple bogberries;
 The MOOR-FOWL to the uncultur'd height
 The sportsman's toilsome steps invite,

Their haunts o'ergrown and low to track :
 There, old and young, the assembled "pack" 1090
 Of black and red their plumage pied
 Close in the dingy covert hide,
 Not apt the stranger's eye to meet
 Unpractis'd: till from that close seat
 Flush'd by the restless dog they spring;
 When, lo! the loud and whirring wing,
 Scarce mounting o'er the heathery ground,
 Alas! the well-aimed shot has found.

But on the mountain's steeper ledge,
 CAIRNGORM, or huge BEN-NEVIS' edge, 1100
 Whence the far eyes the prospect take
 Of rock and forest, sea and lake;
 With leg and foot, may well compare
 Close-feather'd with the fur-clad hare,
 Birds, more sequester'd still, maintain
 Aloft their solitary reign.
 There patient of the mountain cold,
 Secure on their aërial hold
 From fox or wild-cat's talon'd paw,
 From raven's beak and eagle's claw, 1110
 But not secure from venturous man,
 Oft falls the lonely PTARMIGAN.
 Heedless of danger, one by one,
 They fall before the fowler's gun,
 As o'er the lichen-mantled rock,
 Or bushy heath, in kindred flock
 Of hiding inexpert they stray;
 And stain with red their mottled gray
 Ere yet the bird, who lately drest
 His feathers in their summer vest 1120

Of *brown* with lighter tints arrang'd,
 Has now his *autumn* colours chang'd,
 And for the mottled gray assumes
 The *whiteness* of his *winter* plumes.
 Poor bird! 'tis his no more to know
 Those winter plumes, as white as snow,
 Which drifted clothes his mountain rock:
 No more to lead his household flock
 Free o'er their native pastures bare,
 And pick at large their scanty fare. 1130
 Too blest, no danger had he known,
 But rocks and barren wilds alone!

He too, with curv'd and forked tail,
 Whose wonted offspring southward fail,
 By growing culture thence pursued
 To haunt the northern mountain wood;
 The BLACK COCK with his dappled mate;
 He too is doom'd beneath the weight
 Of the quick vollied flash to bleed,
 And swell the skilful fowler's meed. 1140

Be HIS the MEED, whate'er it be,
 His proper meed! Nor envy we
 His task, 'mid nature's works to toil,
 Not to admire them, but to spoil;
 His praise, the marksman's skill, to tell
 What numbers by his prowess fell;
 His joy, to triumph in the slain,
 And find his pleasure in their pain!
 True, 'twas of old by God decreed,
 That birds for man's support may bleed, 1150
 His words to Noah: not so plain
 The licence, which those words contain,

Nor know I well what records hold
 The licence, in what court inroll'd,
 To cut their lives for *pastime* short,
 Or of their sufferings make our *sport*.
 But most accordant to his word
 I deem it, that the needful bird,
 Or beast, should fall by those who smite
 For business, rather than delight. 1160
 And surely most it bears the sign
 And likeness of the stamp divine;
 And sure 'tis most from semblance free
 And blame of wanton cruelty;
 And most accordant to the part,
 Which suits the meek and feeling heart:
 Whom duty leads not on, that they
 Should turn from deeds of blood away,
 Nor on their victim's sufferings pore,
 Nor bathe unbid their hands in gore. 1170

HIM, who is merciful and kind
 . To all his works, the thoughtful mind
 Most seeks by kindness to express:
 And "gentle heart shows gentleness*."

* Chaucer; *Squires Tale*, v. 10797.

. S E P T E M B E R .

Two thirds of the year elapsed. Sensible diminution of the light. Fruitfulness of the month. Prosecution of the harvest. The Harvest Moon. Opinion concerning the phenomenon in former times. Part of the general course of nature. A similar phenomenon every month. Gratitude nevertheless due to divine Providence. Bountiful distribution of her light 1-118

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SEPTEMBER.

SEPTEMBER comes: the waning year
Two portions of his just career
Has now fulfill'd; a third remains,
Or ere of age full ripe the reins
He of his transient rule decline,
And to a new-born heir resign.

SEPTEMBER comes. The lingering morn,
Each change to later splendour born;
The advancing eve, each change array'd
In earlier and in denser shade;
The conflict shew of daily light,
Diminish'd by the incroaching night:
Till each shall soon with equal powers
Divide the parti-colour'd hours,
In trains, exact of tale, arranged;
And, ere again the month be changed,
The usurper Night's superior sway
Be stablish'd o'er the yielding Day.

10

Meanwhile to glad SEPTEMBER's dawn,
Together bath mild AUTUMN drawn
Rich gifts from nature's bounteous stores;
And still about his footsteps pours
Profusely from the copious horn
FRUITS well-matur'd and yellow CORN.

20

Now to the CORNFIELD, ye, whose hands
The unfinish'd HARVEST still demands!

While still the season mild allows
 Unharm'd the ripen'd grain to house,
 And earlier nights and shorter days
 Prohibit yet prolong'd delays , 30
 Speed forth incessant to complete
 The gathering of the golden WHEAT ;
 Or if the OAT his pendants rear
 O'erarch'd ; or BARLEY's bristling ear
 Still standing crave your care to stow
 Its treasures in the swelling mow.

Time presses: haste not then away
 Impatient with the setting day !
 Nor, though in twilight veil'd the sun
 Have now his daily journey run, 40
 Cease ye the busy work to ply !
 For, lo ! his substitute on high,
 As if to warn you not to close
 Your toil in premature repose ;
 As if to prompt you still to wield
 The sickle 'mid the harvest field ;
 With face benign and fair display'd
 At once to monish and to aid ;
 Eve after eve to glad the scene,
 With brief the intervals between 50
 Her risings each successive night
 Eve after eve with aspect bright
 Scarce minish'd, nature's timely boon,
 Comes forth full-orb'd the HARVEST MOON.

More apt to notice what they saw
 Contented, than the veil to draw
 Aside with philosophick mind,
 And search the cause which lurks behind ;

Good simple hearts there were of old,
 Which, as they fail'd not to behold 60
 Each night the HARVEST MOON arise
 Benignant in the autumnal skies,
 The parting sun's bright rod assume,
 And twilight's gathering shade illume,
 Deem'd it with meek and grateful sense
 A SPECIAL ACT OF PROVIDENCE ;
 That the rich harvest fruits, which God
 Had in his bounty shed abroad,
 By that clear cresset men might see
 To reap ; and in their granary, 70
 Ere the bright season past away,
 Secure the golden treasure lay.

And what, if NO PECULIAR CAUSE,
 Beyond the course of nature's laws,
 Thus gives the harvest moon to shine :—
 What, if that bounteous care benign
 Be but a portion of the whole
 Stupendous plan, which bids her roll
 Her silver orb through heav'n's high way
 In course oblique, that so her ray 80
 May best to all beneath the sky
 Its light, as most they need, supply :—
 What, though to those, who mark aright
 Each monthly course with watchful sight,
 EACH MONTH AT TIMES her rising sphere
 With small the intervals appear,
 What times you see her path decline
 Least from the horizontal line,
 Though notic'd most in autumn eves,
 When her expanded face receives 90

The western sun's departing rays,
 And back returns the full-orb'd blaze
 Reflected from her mirrour sheen;
 And reapers by her beams serene,
 Behold postpon'd the approaching night,
 And bless the salutary light:—
 Shall we for this the rather fail
 With meek and GRATEFUL HEART to hail
 The wisdom, goodness, and the might;
 Which made "the moon to rule the night;" 100
 Taught at her birth to know the time,
 Both when to quit, and when to climb,
 The heavenly slope; with lamp divine,
 When needed most, the most to shine;
 In equatorial skies to gleam
 With nor prolong'd nor shorten'd beam;
 At the dark poles, or south or north,
 To go with welcome brightness forth,
 And, half her course, undimm'd supply
 Effulgence to the sunless sky; 110
 In this our intermediate space
 To hold a fluctuating place,
 And through her monthly season range
 With ever varying interchange:—
 But most, when autumn most requires
 The cresset of her useful fires,
 To glad the farmer's longing sight,
 And bless him with the harvest light?

Ah! who unmov'd abroad can look
 In yon bright page of nature's book,

In grand simplicity display'd?
 Ah! who, his feeble sight to aid,
 Can call his meditating mind,
 And think on HIM, who, unconfin'd
 Himself, each orb that o'er us rolls
 Confines, directs, maintains, controls;
 Nor see in every thing above
 A MIRACLE of POW'R and LOVE?

Not less stupendous is the force,
 Which holds the planets in their course, 130
 And bids the sun and moon to know
 Their journeys, when and where to go;
 Than that which gave the sun command
 Still upon GIBEON's heights to stand,
 And bade her course the lingering moon
 Stay o'er the vale of AJALON.
 But COMMON THINGS, and such as rise
 Day after day before our eyes,
 Howe'er surprising, beauteous, grand;
 Howe'er their excellence demand 140
 Due homage from the admiring sight;
 Less strongly on our senses smite,
 And seem, when often seen, to need
 CONSIDERATION's hand to lead
 Our steps within the temple's pale,
 To draw aside the shrouding veil,
 And show within his secret shrine
 Inthron'd the ARTIFICER DIVINE,
 The first, the last, the central soul,
 Who made, preserves, and rules the whole; 150
 Of parts so intricate compact,
 Of structure so minute, exact,

Of pow'r so strong, of speed so fleet,
So smooth of motion, and complete
In all its bearings; that the scheme,
If to the thoughtless eye it seem
As but of course, and mov'd along
By will and action of its own,
Shews to the thought a SOUL unseen,
Presiding o'er the vast machine; 160
A potent, sage, contriving MIND,
Which first the mighty work design'd;
Which, ever present, holds it still
In being by his sovereign will,
Of nature's movements and her laws
Alone the INDEPENDENT CAUSE;
Which, were that sovereign will withheld,
Nature by that suspension quell'd
Would sink from her vice-kingdom hurl'd;
And o'er this grand and beauteous world 170
Wild "Chaos, Anarch old*," regain
The sceptre of his primal reign.

With reason then on yonder sky
The farmer casts a grateful eye,
Where more than usual splendors shine;
And thoughtful of the Hand divine,
Whence all proceeds, his gracious boon
AVOWS IN YONDER HARVEST MOON.

And O! be his, for all his bliss
To THANK, but not to thank amiss; 180
The SOURCE of wealth and FOUNT of good:
And fill'd with gladness and with food,

■ Milton: *Paradise Lost*.

And mindful, whence his blessings come,
 To praise Him, at the HARVEST HOME!
 To praise Him, less with clamorous noise,
 The annual feast's intemperate joys,
 With "midnight shout and revolvry,"
 And "tipsey dance and jollity*;"
 Than with the still and feeling heart
 With love o'erflowing, while a part 190
 Of what from heav'n one hand receives,
 The other forth in bounty gives,
 Ev'n from the show of evil free;
 And seeks each village family
 To cheer with gifts, dispers'd among
 Parent and child, the old and young;
 And the thatch'd homestead's meek recess
 With pure substantial blessings bless!

From fear of future dearth releast,
 To keep with joy the harvest feast; 200
 Full fa'n in thanks to God to yield
 The first-fruits of the harvest field;
 Their LAW the sons of ISRAEL taught†:—
 Such law the^r bordering GENTILES caught,
 Unless perchance the buoyant mind
 To joyance nature's self inclin'd,
 And bade the sounds of triumph start
 Untutor'd from the o'erflowing heart.
 Such FEAST of old OUR FATHERS knew:
 But blended wjth the honour due 210
 To the dread Majesty of heaven,
 A mixture of the heathen leaven.

* Milton; *Comus*.

† Exod. xxiii. 16. Lev. xxiii. 10.

Hence loaded with the latest grain,
 Gay flow'rs adorn'd the HARVEST WAIN
 And seated there, with chaplet crown'd,
 And hail'd with pipe and tabor's sound,
 Beneath her arm a corn-sheaf plated,
 Her fingers with a sickle graced,
 With men and women's loud acclaim,
 Maidens and boys, in triumph came, 220
 In guise of straw-form'd image seen,
 Rejoicing home the HARVEST-QUEEN.

'Twas CERES; goddess she of corn
 Or one of Gentile error born,
 Allow'd like reverence to claim,
 A PAGAN form with CHRISTIAN name!
 Some SAINT, to whom vain men might lift
 Their hearts for Providence's gift;
 The Maker's bounteous care disown,
 Or with another share his throne! 230
 Then came the feast, the sport, the dance,
 With much of gross intemperance,
 Which, sooth to say, might more become
 The heathens at a harvest-home,
 Than those, who, heav'n-instructed know
 To whom all precious gifts they owe,
 And what the due returns that greet
 His senses with grateful odours sweet.
 Alas for those, of heart and mind
 Ignorant, and unimprov'd, blind,
 Whose gifts of piety and prayer
 Are "loaves of the soul, without!" 240

Nor only does the gather'd corn
September's wealthy path adorn.

For now where FARNHAM's mitred keep
Sees chalky WEY beneath it creep,
Slow stealing through the fertile fields,
Of SURRY; or the shady wealds
Of SUSSEX, and her fruitful vales, •
Court.wooningly the southern gales; 250
Or where far off by SEVERN stream
With frequent points ascending gleam,
And crown'd with many a glistening vane,
The pinnacles of WORCESTER's fanc;
Or where through undulating KENT
Glides the smooth MEDWAY to present
The tribute of her gentle tide,
To swell imperial THAMES's pride;
Or where yon venerable pile,
O'er window'd nave and buttress'd aisle, 260
Lifts his embattled tow'r on high,
As if with conscious majesty
That his the boast within to own
Fair ENGLAND'S HIERARCHAL THRONE:
Of old and young a mingled train,
The village maid, the village swain,
The HOP-GROUND seek: unfix, and lay
In prostrate rows the frequent stay,
Round which aspiring, like the vine's
Lithe tendrils, creeps and climbs and twines, 270
With many a scaly pendent drop,
Our British vine, the twisted Hop.
Pick'd from the lithe and spiral "bind,"
Which round the lofty hop-pole twin'd,

The scaly fruit is stor'd within
 The chamber of the ample "bin."
 Thence in large sacks the distant mart
 It visits, and performs its part
 With grateful bitter to reduce
 The mawkish malt's fermented juice, 280
 And cause it unimpair'd to bear
 The influence of the changeful year.
 Meanwhile in tall and well-pil'd cones,
 Stript of their vegetable zones,
 Erect the marshal'd POLES remain:
 As o'er Arabia's sterile plain ,
 The camp in dense array presents
 Its well-rang'd streets of dusky tents;
 Or mid hot Africk's level sands
 Compact the hut-form'd village stands. 290

Nor less in DEVON's fruitful dales,
 Where health inspires the sea-born gales
 That breathe o'er DART's romantick way,
 And the deep curve of broad TORBAY;
 From trees, with golden splendour deckt
 And beauty's roseate blush, collect
 The swains in baskets heap'd on high
 The autumnal ORCHARD's rich supply.
 Still richer, where their nectarous juice
 The REDSTREAK's pulpy fruits produce; 300
 The REDSTREAK, long the boast and pride
 Of HEREFORD: nor land beside
 Such fruit, such luscious nectar, yields,
 As you, ye Herefordian fields!

So sung by him, your native Bard,
 Who in Miltonian numbers dar'd
 On theme, by bard before unsung,
 To tune his patriotick tongue ;
 And sang your orchards' peerless grace ;
 And told how the superior place 310
 Nor apples to the grape resign,
 Nor cyder to the generous wine.

Ingenious PHILIPS ! though thy rhyme
 Attain not to the march sublime,
 The diapason sweet and strong
 Unrivall'd of thy MILTON'S song ;
 Though small the worth our taste may deem
 Capricious of thy rustick theme ;
 And train'd to daintier measures heed
 As al-too quaint thy simple reed :— 320
 Yet once thy British Georgick shar'd
 High rank beside the Mantuan bard,
 Who sang of corn-fields, and of trees,
 Herds, vineyards, and the prudent bees.
 And in thy page is well portray'd
 How Nature, by the skillful aid
 Assisted of her handmaid Art,
 Most usefully performs her part,
 To enrich the APPLE'S fruitful store :
 With much of philosophick lore, 330
 And much of moral truth combin'd,
 Sweet to the meditative mind ;
 And much of feeling interwove,
 That speaks the honest patriot's love,
 Love for his country's blessings shown,
 Which deems that country's bliss his own.

Less happy, that thy rural Muse
 From nature's works to heavenly views
 Lifts not the soul in loftier mood!
 For nature's works, when rightly view'd, 340
 Are like a ladder from the sky
 Let down to guide mankind on high,
 An avenue in bounty given
 To help us on our way to heaven.
 Nor ever does the Muse maintain
 So well her own, her rightful reign,
 And vindicate her heavenly birth;
 As when from walking o'er the earth,
 And musing on terrestrial things,
 She seeks to prune her heav'n-ward wings, 350
 And buoy'd by nature's breath to soar,
 Where angels NATURE'S GOD adore.

Thus HE, who sang the SEASONS' change,
 As through the ever-varying range
 Of nature's works he look'd abroad,
 In all beheld "the varied God*."
 Thus MILTON, though behind the skreen
 "Of these his works but dimly seen,"
 In all this universal frame
 Discern'd, confest, ador'd the same. 360
 Almighty Lord, and hail'd the sign
 Of boundless love and pow'r divin†.
 'Twas ADAM'S hymn in paradise,
 Well-suited to that state of bliss.
 And he, who trains his mind to see
 Of all this world's variety

* Thomson's *Hymn on the Seasons*.

† Milton, *Paradise Lost*, v. 157.

The present Deity preside,
Its Cause, Preserver, Lord, and Guide;
So stamp'd on nature's speechless scroll,
So blazon'd on his written roll, 370
Goes far the victory to win
O'er the sad fruits of primal sin,
And ev'n on earth enjoy the reign
Restor'd of paradise again.

By laws indissoluble bound,
Still onward moves in ceaseless round
The course of nature's annual wheel.
And as the years advancing steal
Our life's successive charms away,
So every week and every day, 380
Now past the season's lusty prime
Of manhood, though the hoary time
Be yet from empire full withheld,
Give SYMPTOMS of approaching ELD.
Each week, each day, some wonted grace,
That lighted nature's youthful face,
Is vanish'd from the well-known view:
Each week, each day, some symptom new,
Some wrinkle deep or silver hair
Is stamp'd, decay's impression, there. 390

Go, and explore the WOODLAND SCENE,
Where late a general cloke of green,
With tints of light or darker shade,
The forest's denizens array'd!

The course of healthful vigour run,
 That cloke of green has now begun
 To deepen to an ALTER'D DIE :
 And, like the shrill-toned trumpet's cry,
 By its chang'd foliage crisp and sere
 Gives signal of the waning year. 400
 Nor rarely, as its paths you trace
 With slow and meditative pace,
 Now and again the rustling breeze,
 That sighs and murmurs in the trees,
 The trees, that bend and bow the head
 As mourning for the leaves they shed,
 The leaves, that singly eddying round
 Wake the rapt ear, or on the embrown'd
 Earth's surface congregating pour
 Full thick the vegetable shower ; 410
 Join with those changeful tints to say
 How swiftly speeds the year away.

Among the first with fading leaves
 For its departing glory grieves,
 With leaves all brown, but spotted o'er
 With darker stains, the SYCAMORE,
 Prompt to announce the year's decline :—
 With leaves, with yellow pale that shine,
 The same his brother MAPLE shows :
 Fine citron tints the ASH-TREE throws 420
 O'er his fair form, with seed-chests hung,
 In drops of key-like bunches strung.
 Bright yellow, but with varying tints,
 The HORNBEAM's plaited leaves imprints,
 Tall POPLAR, shivering in the gale,
 Pale BIRCH, and sickly LIME-TREE pale,

HAZEL, and scarlet-berried THORN.
 But hues of darker die adorn
 With tawny red, or orange grain,
 The QUICKBEAM wing'd, the broad-leav'd PLANE, 430
 The CHESTNUT, and the spreading BEECH:
 While slow to quit his robe, but rich
 In autumn gleams of golden green
 Stands forth the Monarch of the scene:
 And still their native green retain,
 Their leaves with borrow'd tints to stain
 The latest of the woodland realm,
 The ALDER dark and lighter ELM.

Mix'd with the lingering verdure's grace,
 Now near his equinoctial race, 440
 Touch'd by his fingers' mellowing glow,
 Such TINTS SEPTEMBER'S woodlands show.
 And who with eyes to see, and heart
 To take in nature's charms a part,
 Can on September's richness dwell,
 Nor feel his heart in silence swell,
 Nor feast his still unsated eyes
 With that magnificence of dies,
 The poet's vaunt, the painter's pride?
 But, ah! those tints deceitful hide 450
 The seeds of slow, but sure DECAY,
 Which on the secret vitals prey:
 And soon those tints shall vanish all,
 And with the wither'd foliage fall,
 To which, presageful of their end,
 So sweet but sad a grace they lend.
 And ev'n like these autumnal trees
 Shines the fair victim of disease,

Which in her frame's recesses lurks ;
 And with unseen consumption works 460
 To paint her cheek, her life-blood drain,
 At once her beauty and her bane !

Go, seek the many-spangling FLOW'RS,
 Which in the spring or summer hours
 Embroider'd nature's carpet green !
 Few gladden now the desert scene
 Of those which lately woo'd the air
 With fragrance, and their petals fair
 Expanded to the admiring eye :
 And FEWER still fresh scents supply, 470
 Fresh colours, which now newly blown
 SEPTEMBER numbers for his own.

If where the mountain bugle wakes
 The echoes of KILLARNEY's lakes,
 And GLENA's waving crags incline
 O'er sainted MUCKUS' abbey-shrine,
 The ARBUTE opes its pensile bells ;
 All beautiful itself, it tells
 In concert with the fading woods,
 Of winds and equinoctial floods, 480
 Which* soon their gather'd rage shall pour ;
 And beauty, on that distant shore
 Forsaken, left to bloom alone
 Unnotic'd on her desert throne,
 Or if within the solitude
 Of birchen copse or fir-tree wood,
 On trunk decay'd or heaving root
 Some parasitick FUNGUS shoot,

And, nurtur'd by September dews,
The enamel of his light diffuse:— 490
(For mostly in the forest dank,
Or 'mid the meadow's herbage rank,
When FLORA'S lovelier tribes give place,
The MUSHROOM'S scorn'd but curious race
Bestud the moist autumnal earth;
A quick but perishable birth,
Prompt their bright colours to display,
And prompt to alter, fade, decay:—
Though much you fail not to admire
Their parts, their structure, their attire, 500
The pillar-stem, the table-head,
As with a silken carpet spread,
Inlaid with many a brilliant die
Of nature's high-wrought tapestry;
Of autumn's waning strength they speak,
And tell how nature, worn and weak,
Prepares her sceptre to resign,
And in inactive languor pine.

Go to the fields, the hills, the groves,
Where FEATHER'D STRANGERS woo'd their loves, 510
And nestled in our northern zone!
Away those stranger birds are flown:
Ev'n he, among the last to stay,
The spotted BEAM-BIRD hastes away;
And leaves his homestead in the vine
Grape-glistening, or the sweet-brier twine,
Which round the peasant's straw-roof'd shed
Has wove its berries scarlet red,

On osier trellis trimly laced ;
Sign of the simple native taste 520
By art untaught, and frugal care
Industrious, which hold dwelling there.

And last of all prepare apace
For distant flight the SWALLOW RACE.

Not without sign, the time was near
To strike their tents, their standard rear,
Their squadrons for the march array,
And take their winter-quarters' way,
Has August dealt his auguries :
But now beneath SEPTEMBER skies, 530
Lo, prompted by that unseen power
Instinctive, round the village tower,
The grange, and cottage-ridge along,
In densely CONGREGATED throng,
Still more the future pilgrims swarm !
Lo, in the cloudless sunshine warm
Exulting, some select their seat
On buttress, frieze, or parapet ;
Some to the upright surface cling
With claws tenacious ; some, with wing 540
Outstretch'd, each glossy feather clean,
And for the impending voyage preen,
Close planted on the mantled roof !
Anon disturb'd they rise : aloof
At once they wheel their rapid flight :
Gleams in the sun their plumage white
Upturn'd ; above, the sable crowd
Of pinions, like a showery cloud
That o'er the sunny landscape sails,
The darken'd light an instant veils, 550

As with loud chatter, scream, and squeak,
 Which the full heart's enjoyment speak,
 Quick pass they. Thence with motion fleet
 Returning to its favourite seat,
 The swarm its wonted task resumes,
 And council holds, and trims its plumes,
 Expectant till the voice divine
 Gives to their hearts the secret sign,
 By them with certain sense perceived,
 By us unnotic'd; till bereaved 560
 We gaze on each frequented spot,
 Of late with countless clusters fraught,
 NOT MARK'D DEPARTING. They meantime
 Through ANDALUSIA's sultry clime,
 And onward where GIBRALTAR's crown
 On the pent sea looks proudly down,
 To CEUTA's rock, and hot TANGIER,
 Afar their southward voyage steer;
 To LIBYAN sands, ATLANTICK isle,
 Or the far stream of MEMPHIAN NILE; 570
 And leave us curious to explore
 The osier'd bank, and rushy shore,
 Of river, sea, and freshet lake;
 If chance the buried clusters break,
 Emerging from the whelming wave,
 The slumber of that liquid grave.

In this wide world, where nature plays
 Such wonders as may well amaze
 The thoughtless mind with strange surprise,
 And pose and puzzle ev'n the wise:— 580

In this wide world, of miracle
 So pregnant, hard it were to tell
 What marvel may or may not be!
 And well we know and own, that HE,
 Whose only is creation's right,
 Whose will is law, whose word is might,
 Can, if he choose, his works arrange
 In modes most wonderful and strange;
 In modes, which, witness'd to the mind
 By facts, must sure acceptance find; 590
 In modes, which still the mind defy
 To sound, and show the reason, why
 Such things have being. 'Tis for man,
 Such mysteries in nature's plan
 To search; to fathom and to weigh
 Effect and cause, as best he may;
 And when he can't the art explore,
 Content the ARTIFICER adore.

Yet boots it well, on matters strange,
 And passing nature's wonted range, 600
 With credence in suspense to pause;
 And, ere we reason on the cause,
 FACTS with their EVIDENCE compare,
 And surely know if such things are.

'Twere HARD, 'twere PASSING HARD, to think,
 That plunging from the reedy brink
 Of pool or willow-fringed stream,
 As some of nature's votaries deem,
 In autumn's wane the swallow race
 Should seek so strange a dwelling place; 610
 There foot to foot, and wing to wing,
 And mouth to mouth, in clusters cling;

There their subaqueous refuge keep,
And, through the livelong winter sleep.

'Twere HARD to think, a form so light,
So fitted for ethereal flight,
So fit to quaff the upper air,
Should to the watry world repair,
Successful try the steep descent,
And breathe the grosser element. 620

'Twere HARD to think, while many a kind,
Of feeble wing, and pow'r confin'd,
Content their wonted flight to take
From tree to tree, from brake to brake,
Start on their annual voyage forth
From north to south, from south to north;
The SWALLOW, whose unwearied flight
Foretell'd the morn, infring'd the night,
Nor sought repose, nor brook'd delay
Through all the livelong summer day, 630
Embracing in his daily speed
A space from TAMAR to the TWEED,
Perchance the backward space again
From TWEED to BRITAIN'S southern main:—
'Twere HARD to think, that he alone
Should fain his nature's bent disown,
His speed forego, his pinions close,
And sink in indolent repose.

Not but that haply here and there,
Too YOUNG or too INFIRM to bear 640
The labour of that distant way,
Behind a straggling bird may stay:—
Not but that seeking refuge near
The grassy brook or rushy mere,

The swelling wave may o'er them spread,
 And whelm them in their secret bed:—
 Not but, while wintry sleep restrains
 The current of their torpid veins,
 The vital spark may lurk beneath
 Death's semblance; and by summer's breath 650
 Rekindled in a scanty few
 A faint and transient life renew.

Such things by meet narrators told,
 The prudent Muse is fain to hold
 In cautious credence: more she deems
 The fiction of fantastick dreams.

For that FAR OFF the general race
 Speeds to its WINTRY DWELLING PLACE,
 And from our northern climate flees,
 And travels o'er the mediate seas: 660

BEAR WITNESS, ye, who see them throng
 September's busy month along,
 As if PREPARING for their way;
 But who, ere cool October's day
 Have often dawn'd, their haunts explore,
 And find their vanish'd tribes no more;
 Save now and then some noon serene
 A lonely straggler may be seen .
 Around the accustom'd roof to stray,
 And bask him in the sunny ray:— 670

BEAR WITNESS ye, though rare the sight,
 Who mark them on their SOUTHWARD FLIGHT,
 Whether in congregated mass
 O'er ENGLAND's breezy downs they pass,
 Accoutred for the bordering main;
 O'er neighbouring FRANCE or distant SPAIN;

Or where, with strait contracted tide,
 The broad ATLANTICK waves divide
 Fair EUROPE'S groves from AFRICK'S sands,
 IBERIAN from BARBARICK lands:—

680

BEAR WITNESS ye, who far from shore
 'Mid the salt waste, with lonely prore
 The LAND-INCIRCLED SEA, that laves
 His fertile isles with gulphy waves,
 Or wide ATLANTICK MAIN have plough'd;
 And seen on yard-arm, sail, and shroud,
 As wearied by their distant flight
 Their flocks for brief repose alight,
 Then busk them with the dawning day,
 And tempt again the aërial way:—

690

To east, to west, BEAR WITNESS ye,
 Who EASTWARD o'er the midland sea
 Have mark'd their countless myriads pour
 Tow'rd ASIA'S hills and EGYPT'S shore;
 Or WESTWARD far remote have seen,
 Where rolls the ATLANTICK flood between,
 For ever with the varying year,
 In great COLUMBUS' hemisphere,
 Their KINDRED TRIBES incessant roam,
 And with the season change their home:—

700

BEAR WITNESS ALL, nor osier'd mere,
 Nor brook, nor sea confines them here;
 Free as the wind that hence they stray,
 Their God their leader on the way,
 His will the compass and the helm,
 That steers them o'er the watry realm,
 From shore to shore, from clime to clime:
 Alert to profit by the time

Where'er they sojourn, nor to steep
 Their senses in protracted sleep, 710
 But all their faculties employ
 In buoyancy of life and joy !
 A truth, more full of pleasing thought,
 But not with less of marvel fraught,
 With less of clear stupendous sign
 To testify the POW'R DIVINE,
 Though haply less of DEVIOUS FORCE
 Imprest on nature's wonted course,
 Than if beneath the stream they crept,
 And in unconscious slumber slept. 720

Not vain the voice of PROPHET SEER*,
 Who spake of old in ISRAEL'S ear,
 And bade them, like the Swallow, know
 Their season when to come and go.
 "O well is thee and happy thou†,"
 Who, like the SWALLOW, KNOWEST how
 To hear, to listen, and obey,
 When the still voice forbids thy stay,
 And bids thee, at its call to come,
 Seek, where it shows, thy sheltering home, 730
 And warns, when wintry storms molest,
 To "flee away, and be at rest‡."
 Be His the glory, His the praise,
 Who leads thee his appointed ways,
 And tells thee of the appointed time !
 At every hour, in every clime,
 Be thine to know the call divine,
 The refuge and the rest be thine !

And so in such a constant tone,
Well-nigh our summer birds are gone,
The little songsters, with their notes
That gladden'd all our fields and groves,
Or ere September's days are past,
Nor yet from her exhaustless store
Does the keen North her hosts supply
To winter in our milder sky.

But would you wish meanwhile to trace
The kindreds of the feather'd race,
Such as o'er ocean's surface skim,
Or through its curling bosom swim,
NATIVES and TENANTS of our shores;
Attend her, as the Muse explores,
While yet September mild invites
The craggy and the cavern'd heights,
That beetle o'er the northern flood,
The noisy SEABIRDS' wild abode.

Mid western SCOTLAND's mountain pass,
Where 'mong her bleak and stormy seas
Through FAN MAC COFF'S columnar cave,
Boils the pent ocean's yellow wave,
Or where on RAIR'S shores exposed,
In strange Mossick rock disposed,
Deep in the unfathom'd billows stand
The CAUSEWAYS, rock of solid sand,
And, high above, abrupt and steep,
Their heads the shafts of hoar steep
On the tall rock's craggy top
Beside the ocean's pebbled shore.

Their home the kindred plunderers plant,
Green SKARF, and sable CORVORANT.

770

The time, the task, of breeding o'er,
Yet still they keep their native shore,
From their lov'd homes no wanderers they!—
See, where he skirts the winding bay,
YON BIRD, in dark green plumage drest,
With vigorous wing and tufted crest,
And eye that darts an emerald-flame!

And see, with quick unerring aim
He strikes, and upward bears away
From the salt wave his funny prey,

780

Across his sharp and hooked bill!
Now with elastick force, and skill
Prodigious, casts above his head,
And with capacious gullet spread
Receives him in his downright fall,
And undivided swallows all!

Not satiate so the ravenous bird:
A second fish, and now a third,
And more his appetite demands;
Till gorg'd on yonder rock he stands
O'erspent, and in a stupid doze
Seeks for his gluttred maw repose.

790

Down rushing from his cloudy height,
With stronger bill, and swifter flight,
And heavier weight, and broader sweep
Of pinion, plunges in the deep
The snow-white GANNET. Where the main
Birds the huge rock with liquid chain,

HEBRID or ORCAD mountain lone,
 Or AILSA's solitary cone, 800
 Or, crowning with its rocky mass
 FORTH's widening frith, stupendous BASS;
 Or where from CALEDONIAN seas,
 Bounding the stormy HEBRIDES,
 The THULE of the wild north-west,
 SAINT KILDA rears his central crest:—
 SAINT KILDA, desolate and wild,
 Sung by the Muse's tenderest child,
 Sweet COLLINS' legendary strain,
 "Its prospect but the wintry main, 810
 Barren its soil, and bleak, and bare,
 Nor vernal bee e'er murmur'd there*:"—
 There, when the breezes, stiff and starch,
 Are soften'd of ungenial March,
 And SPRING with sickly smile appears;
 Preceded by their harbingers,
 As if sent forth the land to spy,
 Borne on south-western gales, with cry
 And noisy scream, the SOLAN host
 Again their old forsaken post, 820
 A shadowy cloud of snow-white plumes,
 In close compacted troop resumes,
 And with SEPTEMBER'S shortening day
 Restrike their tents and speed away.
 But whence they come, and whither go,
 There are not who pretend to know,
 Save that disperst at large they flee
 In parties round the boundless sea,

O'er BRITAIN'S girdling waters soar,
 And oft by CORNWALL'S rugged shore 830
 Float homeless 'mid the ambient air,
 And seek at will their finny fare.

Then when more genial days invite,
 'Tis theirs with congregating flight
 To seek their ISLAND HOLDS: amass
 From the spare-rock the wither'd grass,
 With daily toil; or floating reed,
 Or fragments of the loose seaweed
 And in close caverns cloven deep
 By nature in the rocky steep, 840
 Or on the mountain's shelving breast,
 Arrange the loose constructed nest,
 Occasion oft of bitter fray;
 If one less fortunate survey
 With envious and malignant eyes
 A happier brother's well-earn'd prize
 For not the human heart alone
 Would make another's wealth its own!

And so the SUMMER LONG they flock,
 In clouds about the sea-girt rock, 850
 There on their single eggs to brood;
 To hatch their speckled young; for food,
 From their steep watch-tow'r in the sky,
 Mark with keen glance the herring fry
 Beneath the mantling waves advance;
 With motion quick, as that keen glance,
 Sheer on the passing prey below,
 With black-tipt wing outstretch'd, to throw
 Their weight abrupt, and through the air
 Aloft the frequent victim bear. 860

Nor fails the victor oft to know
 The skill of a successful foe,
 If from the impending summit hung,
 Thence on the twisted cordage slung,
 To storm him in his rocky home,
 Charged with the venturous FOWLER come
 The OSIER CRADLE's threatening form!
 Unapt to bear the assailing storm,
 Though strive the parent bird to break
 The onset with his pointed beak, 870
 The venturous fowler's hard-earn'd prey
 The eggs and young are swept away,
 Caught by the expectant band beneath;
 While he, from danger sav'd and death,
 (Should death indeed his fearful trade
 Forbear, though threatening, to invade,)
 Clear from the waters' steep abyss,
 Which skirts the jutting precipice,
 Uplifted by his anxious friends
 Clear to the beetling height ascends. 880

Nor less the GANNET's doom'd to find
 The triumph of the human mind,
 (A WONDROUS TALE by annals old,
 Nor less by modern witness told,
 The excursive Muse would fain relate;)
 If from above, the favourite bait
 Lodg'd on a floating board, with eye
 Intent the soaring bird espy;
 Then wheeling swift, and from his height
 With lightning speed down rushing, smite 890
 Through the thick board with arrowy bill:
 Through the thick board with piercing drill

The bill an inch and more hath past.
 O'erpower'd, astounded, and aghast,
 Inert the captur'd victim lies :
 The joyous fowler grasps his prize,
 Thence prompt to draw his frugal 'meal,
 Thence prompt the casual wound to heal,
 And barter at the distant town
 The snow-white plumes and velvet down. 900

'Twere harder task for him to bear,
 Whoe'er thy nesting place should dare
 To storm, and war with thine or thee,
 BROWN SKUA, EAGLE OF THE SEA,
 Thou island king ! Who now art fain
 At large to haunt the wintry main ;
 At large, thy summer sojourn past,
 To dally with the stormy blast,
 And sport thee on the boundless tide ;
 Nor longer on thy fort abide 910
 'Mid SHETLAND's northern waves, that break
 Round craggy FOULAH's lonely peak.

Bird of the sea, and sea-gift throne !
 Who on thy CERE-CLAD BILL alone
 The plundering falcon's ensign wear'st ;
 Alone of ocean's wanderers tear'st
 Thy prey with HOOKED CLAWS acute,
 Projected from the PALMATE FOOT !
 Strong through the billowy deep to swim ;
 More strong to scud o'er ocean's brim, 920
 Or forage in the ærial height !—
 Scared, intercepted in his flight,

Through FEAR OF THEE the ravening gull
 Disgorges from his gullet, full
 Of fresh-caught fish, the finny prey :
 Caught in its rapid seaward way,
 The finny prey is doom'd to fill
 Thy mightier gorge and stronger bill.
 Nor dares the eagle's self to meet
 THY PROWESS, when thy island seat

930

Thou hold'st the BOREAL waves among,
 Guard of thy nest and cherish'd young.
 Nor safe is venturous man to brave
 Thy fastness in the mountain cave,
 And of its treasur'd brood despoil.
 Lest, 'mid his ineffectual toil,
 Descending sheer thy piercing beak
 On his cleft head unshelter'd wreak
 Keen vengeance, and the rocky shore
 Strew with his brains and streaming gore.
 Then only rescued, if the advance

940

Of SHARPEN'D POLE, OR STEEL-CAPT LANCE,
 Meet in full tilt thy furious course ;
 And by thine own impetuous force
 Home through thy bronze-like corslet driven
 Of plaited plumage rent and riven,
 Prevent the death-denouncing blow,
 And leave unscath'd the victor foe.

Fain would the Muse her course pursue
 On fancy's pleasant wing, and view,
 Besides these champions of the race,
 Those of inferior force, and trace

950

Or ere they quit their summer home,
 O'er the wide sea at large to roam,
 The birds that rear in countless flocks
 Their nestlings on our British rocks.

Vain were the task: yet as her flight
 She takes from SHETLAND ISLES to WIGHT,
 From THAMES to SHANNON, may she note,
 How on the rolling billows float; 960
 Or wander o'er the pebbly beach,
 And shore of level sand; or stretch
 Their wings above the ocean stream
 With cry, and bark, and laugh, and scream,
 Which, half amid the whelming sound
 Of wind and surging waters drown'd,
 The listener's rapt attention claims;
 Of various families, and names
 That vary with their changeful hues,
 The ponderous GULLS and lighter MEWS. 970

Yet may she make far-off descent
 On the rich shores of southern KENT,
 Or bleak NORTHUMBRIA'S isles of FERN,
 Discursive with the rapid TERN:
 And note their congregated flight,
 Now soaring up the ærial height,
 Now pouncing on the fishy main,
 Now wheeling round and round again;
 The ear-piercing clamour, loud and shrill;
 The slender head, the awl-like bill, 980
 The pinions' pointed length of sail,
 The tapering form, the forked tail,
 The motions nimble, light, and free,
 That mark those SWALLOWS OF THE SEA.

Yet may she northward set her sail,
 And scud before the favouring gale,
 Where by lone MAN the racing tide
 Runs swift, and on its southern side
 That islet stands, by dweller known
 None save the ocean tribes alone, 990
 And they the burrowing race, whose lair
 Usurp'd the tribes of ocean share.
 There may she pause, and see them spring
 Waked by the morn on clanging wing,
 And darken, as with yell and scream
 They wheel around, the orient beam :
 But chiefly note the PUFFIN sheer
 O'er the scarce dimpled wave career,
 And fly at once, and run, and swim,
 With wing and foot and pendent limb, 1000
 And scarcely in the water dip
 The unwet web or pinion's tip ;
 A compound motion, undefin'd,
 As gliding on against the wind
 With restless course the livelong day
 They forage for their watry prey.

Yet may she coast more northern seas,
 Round HEBRID ISLES and ORCADES,
 And SHETLAND onward, till more far
 Her course the icy mountains bar ; 1010
 And there the kindred FULMAR seek,
 His nostril broad, and crooked beak
 With yellow nail projecting ; whence,
 Instinctive weapon of defence,
 By nature taught, against his foes
 A stream of liquid oil he throws

At random gather'd from the sea,
 His floating food ; more plenteously,
 As tending on the Harpooner's sail,
 He shares the plunder of the whale. 1020
 How great is nature's kindness, shown
 When needed most ! From him alone,
 Free burgher on her common way,
 Himself to man an easy prey,
 By day supplied a grateful feast,
 Their ailments cur'd, their wounds redrest,
 Their lamp illum'd with evening light,
 With down their couches strewn by night,
 SAINT KILDA's simple natives find ;
 Nor less a signal of the wind, 1030
 As by his fittings or repose
 Defin'd the aërial current flows.

Yet may she stretch—But lo ! her eye
 That LITTLE BIRD, swift coursing by,
 Regards with manifest intent,
 To learn his roving spirit's bent :
 And thus she speaks a kindly word
 Of question to that little bird :
 And thus, in fancy's listening ear,
 That little bird gives answer clear. 1040

“ Whence and what art thou, LITTLE BIRD ? ” “ From
 SHETLAND's isles I come,
 Where round the lonely mountain rock the northern
 billows foam :
 Where almost all the summer long the sun shows
 forth his light,
 But now its fast-diminish'd rays give place to
 lengthening night.”

“ What didst thou there, thou little bird ?” “ In the
sweet vernal hour
I sought a solitary isle to make my nuptial
bow'r :
There with my mate our egg to hatch, our feeble
brood to rear,
As our forefathers long had done erewhile from year
to year.”

“What art thou call’d, thou little bird?” “From
holy man I claim,
Who strove of old to walk the deep, the LITTLE
PETREL’s name: 1050
And for that o’er the ocean wave with matchless
speed I flee,
From some the COURSER’s name I bear, the COURSER
OF THE SEA.”

“Now whither go'st thou, little bird?” “I go o'er
ocean wide,
On the white horses of the sea, the curling waves to
ride :
To ramble, as my fancy leads, o'er all the wintry
main,
Till genial hours again return, and spring-tide smile
again.”

“Far wilt thou fly, thou little bird?” “Afar and
wide I flee,
From north to south, from east to west, o’er all the
Atlantick sea.

For foreign climes the last am I to quit thy parting
track,

And I the first at thy return to bid thee welcome
back." 1060

"Where is thy homestead, little bird?" "Upon the
ocean's breast

The dwelling of my homestead is, my sojourn and
my rest.

The wild winds sing the lullaby, that lulls me to my
sleep,

My curtains are the arching waves, my cradle is the
deep."

"What living find'st thou, little bird?" "The
waters yield me food,

Ten thousand precious things that float upon the salt
sea flood :

The oil, that films its surface o'er, clings to my
plumed breast,

Thence by my bill imbib'd becomes my most delicious
feast."

"What vessel bears thee, little bird?" "No vessel
to supply

My passage o'er the seas I need, who run, and swim,
and fly ; 1070

Smooth without effort glide along, without fatigue
outstrip,

And sport behind, before, around the many-winged
ship.

Yet mount I not the vollied clouds, but with soft
bosom sweep,
With web-like foot, and pointed wing, the surface of
the deep :
On water, as on glass, unbent with printless footstep
trip,
And skim the wave, nor in the spray my unwet
pinion dip."

"What is thy refuge little bird, if storms thy path
o'ertake?"

"I lie me to the sheltering rock, or passing vessel's
wake ;
And food with refuge there I find, if kindly heart
a-board,
For kindly is the seaman's heart, a welcome dole
afford.

1080

There lurking close beneath the stern, wash'd by the
surge I ply,

And utter through the starless night a faint and
wailing cry.

The mariner with watchful eye regards my crouching
form,

And notes my wailing note of fear, presageful of the
storm."

"What deems he of thy presence then?" "Alas! of
me he deems,

As of a phantom shape that haunts the sick man's
fitful dreams,

An ominous portentous sign of witchery and woe,
As if my presence caus'd the storm, it only serves to
show.

And when the storm at last arrives, by my alarm
foreshown,
And wildly o'er the tossing waste the labouring bark
is blown, 1090
On me all innocent and free from guile he casts the
blame,
And with ungracious titles blends the harmless
PETREL's name.

But though on me his erring tongue unkindly names
bestow,
He seeks not with unkindly act to work me scathe
or woe:
Some terror checks him, or perhaps some gentle
thought and kind,
And so the refuge that I crave uninjur'd there I
find."

"Thence whither go'st thou, little bird?" "If from
the wintry main

I 'scape in safety, and behold the vernal days
again,

It speed me to my native isle the northern seas
among,

And tend my household cares again, and rear again
my young. 1100

Till there perchance some islander shall seise me,
 more unkind
 Than all the rage of wintry seas, and all the stormy
 wind ;
 Shall perforatè with lighted wick my oil-impregnate
 frame,
 And of the LITTLE PETREL make a lamp, a winged
 flame."

"In sooth it seems, thou little bird, thou lead'st a
 weary life,
 For ever warring with the winds, and with the waves
 at strife :
 For ever perils by the sea above thy path impend,
 And thence preserv'd thou meet'st on land a melan-
 choly end."

"Not so: the pow'rs, my Maker gave, are meet for
 my employ,
 And what thou deem'st a weary life, I deem a life
 of joy : 1110
~~Th~~"future ills it recks me not, on ocean or a-shore,
 Death's shaft is swiftly sped, nor fear embitters it
 before."

"Now, LITTLE PETREL, fare thee well, fleet coursER
 OF THE SEA !
 Clear symptoms mark I of the care of Providence
 in thee :
 Of all the palmate tribe the least, of all 'tis thine to
 stray
 The furthest o'er the boundless sea, and find thy
 homeward way.

Be happy, as thy nature's law permits! And O,
 * may He, *
Who rescued PETER from the waves, and gives such
 * pow'r to thee,
My strength in this wide waste of life to meet my
 trials square,
* And teach me where he wills to go, and what he
 wills to bear*!"

1120

* See a representation of the "winged flame" in Mudie's
British Birds, vol. ii. last page.

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OCTOBER.

WITH symptoms of the year's decline
Mark'd by each deep and furrow'd line,
That gathers on thy clouded face ;
But not without thy proper grace,
Such grace as lights with placid gleams
The eyes of ancient men, and beams
In their meek smile, while on the head
The frost of hoary hairs is shed :

OCTOBER, we thy early day

Rejoice in, and desire its stay.

10

For, as in ancient men, the while

Appears that meek benignant smile,

The wrinkles on the furrow'd cheek,

Inveterate signals, still bespeak

What is, the next approaching stage

Of their eventful pilgrimage :

So well we know thy present state

What darker prospects soon await ;

And ev'n as thou dost first appear,

Fain would we have thee linger here,

20

Nor change thy mild and pleasant day

For signs of more confirm'd decay.

What though the chill and frosty morn,

Late of its fair proportion shorn ;

The hasty twilight, that bereaves

Of their full length the darkening eves ;

The lengthening nights, that now assume
More than their equal share of gloom ;
Mind us of charms, alas ! gone by,
And haply wake a longing sigh : 30
Yet much, when once is spent and past
The tempest's equinoctial blast,
While yet the radiant noons retain
Signs of fair autumn's mellow reign,
Ere yet the deepening shadows near
Of dark November's form appear ;
With much is calm OCTOBER fraught,
To prompt the sadly-pleasing thought ;
With much, amusement to dispense
And pleasure to the admiring sense ; 40
With much, enjoyment's better part,
To store the mind, and mend the heart :
If objects, which the sense amuse,
Give cause for more exalted views,
And forms of earth be made to bear
Stamps of a heavenly character.

For 'tis not he, that throws his glance
Excursive o'er this wide expanse,
And thence on his mimetick page
Can sketch, with Israel's royal sage, 50
In all its form and tints transferr'd
The portraiture of every bird,
That floats upon the liquid air ;
Of every stone earth's caverns bear,
Or plant that from her surface springs,
All beasts, and fish, and creeping things ;
Who reads the BOOK of NATURE right :
Unless from scenes that please the sight,

And to the mind unfold the door
 Of nature's comprehensive store, 60
 He learn that treasure-house to scan,
 A WISER and a BETTER man:
 MORE WISE, to see how separate each
 May the same lore instructive teach
 Of deep contrivance, goodness, might;
 How link in link, th'ey all unite
 To show the same pervading soul,
 That rules and animates the whole:
 And BETTER, in his HEAVENLY GUIDE
 If more and more his heart CONFIDE, 70
 By whom their place and pow'r maintain
 The mutual links of nature's chain,
 By whom all living souls are fed,
 And "all our hairs are numbered*;"
 And thence he learn, still more to see
 With eye of mild BENIGNITY
 Each living thing, as one that draws
 Life from the same creative CAUSE,
 As one that's form'd alike to share
 With him the same preserving care. 80

How LOVELY this OCTOBER DAY!
 Mild Autumn still maintains his sway,
 In part controll'd, but not subdued,
 By tyrant Winter's sceptre rude.
 Come, and ere yet the miry way
 Forbids us far a-field to stray,

* Luke xii. 7.

Come, WELL-BELOVED, forth with me :
For much thou lov'st to hear and see
" Each rural sound, each rural sight,"
Pure source of innocent delight, 90
Now by the swiftly waning year
Made to the pensive mind more dear.
Or, if perchance domestick care,
Or health infirm, detain thee there,
Alone I go: the autumnal hour
O'er all things sheds a soothing power,
And grateful to the musing mood
Is now the rural solitude.

How bright, and blue, and calm, and clear,
Appears the unclouded atmosphere! 100
About the mountain's viewless head
The morn in wreathed folds was spread:
And vainly strain'd the inquiring eye
For stream or hedge, for earth or sky.
But lo! withdrawn the misty skreen,
The far-off landscape smiles serene;
And not a speck we see impair
The pureness of the bright blue air!

Yet remnants of that misty skreen
Still linger on the meadows green, 110
On coppice bow'r, and hedgerow spray,
That flaunting skirts the amusive way.
The SPIDER there her mazy LINE
Suspends, how delicately fine,
Besprent with many a sparkling gem,
From blade to blade, from stem to stem.
Like pleasant thoughts, that rest behind,
The bright memorials to the mind

Of ills, that o'er its prospects cast
 An early gloom, now clear'd and past. 120

Climb we you path, and pause awhile,
 Inclining on the upland stile!
 How deep the STILLNESS all around!
 How clearly comes each DISTANT SOUND!
 The SCHOOLBOY'S shout now mounts the hill,
 And now the PLOUGHMAN'S whistle shrill;
 Hark! 'tis the VILLAGE COCK! and hark!
 'Tis now the lonely SHEEP-DOG'S bark!
 Or WOODQUEST'S solemn coo: or cry
 Harsh-grating of the watchful PIE: 130
 Or JAY'S loud scream of startled fear,
 Announcing steps approaching near,
 Return'd by others, as they press
 To gain the thicket's deep recess:
 Or gabbling GEESE from elmy grange,
 That o'er the late-shorn stubble range:
 Or ROCKS, that crowd the new-turn'd ground,
 Or seek the wood with croaking sound.
 Such simple sounds, that please the ear
 In nature's ample theatre, 140
 Find echoes in the feeling heart
 More than the richest strains of art!

Nor wholly is the hedge-row mute.
 Perch'd by the SPINDLE'S crimson fruit,
 Or the red CORNEL'S leaves among,
 The REDBREAST trills his cheerful song.
 Silent erewhile, of late again
 He wakes the interrupted strain,

As if with kind intent to cheer
The dulness of the waning year. 150

Sing on sweet bird, in safety sing!

A feather of thy russet wing

We would not hurt: and if thou come
To glad our hearth, the frequent crumb

Shall bid thee welcome. Far are flown

Thy social tribes, while thou alone

Sing'st blithe, as in the hour of prime,

Lov'd warbler of the autumnal time.

Of many an early friend bereft,

More prize we those who still are left! 160

And oft I stop, with thee to note,

Though not like thee of tuneful throat

Or breast of ruddy plumage, him

The bird of graceful figure slim,

And robe and vest and kerchief PIED;

As to and fro, from side to side,

With QUIVERING TAIL, and forward head,

Quick runs he o'er the dewy mead,

And darts upon his insect prey:—

Or mark the flocks of LINNETS GRAY 170

Start from the sheltering hedge beneath,

And flutter o'er the furze-clad heath.

See, from their white-plum'd fronts are fled,

And dusky throat, the flaming red,

Till spring again with love illumine

The lustre of each blood-bright plume.

About the globe-like cluster'd ball,

Which crowns the upright thistle tall,

With many a fellow of his kind,

Fruit of the summer months combin'd, 180

The GOLDFINCH waves his yellow wing;
And in the sunshine wantoning
Pecks from the plant the plumed seed:—
Swift from its native dwelling freed,
The down unfolds its radiate sail,
And dances on the buxom gale,
Or o'er the ground disporting light
Streaks the green turf with flakes of white.
Poor bird, thy few brief days enjoy!
Soon shall the idle truant boy 190
Intrap, and in a cage include
Thy sportive form; or winter rude
Whelm'd in the snow thy food withhold,
Or pinch thee with inclement cold.
But thine, from vain forebodings free,
Meanwhile the cheerful heartsome glee.
And so to us does Wisdom call,
And bids us not with care forestall
O'erexquisite the ills that lie
Hid in unseen futurity: 200
But thankfully to day enjoy
God's bounty, nor the mind annoy
With anxious musings on to morrow;
And, if our portion then be sorrow,
To bear with faith, as best we may,
And patience the afflictive day.
Unwise the foretaste of a doom
Severe, which may or may not come;
And, if it comes, to blunt its sting
May haply with its coming bring, 210
Beyond anticipation's note,
Some sweet and precious antidote:

Enough for man, what God's high will
Appoints, his daily share of ill!

Hark to that clattering noise afar,
Which with repeated frequent jar
Sounds from the depth of yonder woon,
And mars its silent solitude!
Approach, but gently and with care,
Lest you the busy woodman scare, 220
And of his craft's rich meed despoil.
See, where intent upon his toil
He stands, and smites with frequent blow
Of his hard bill the prize below,
Firm in that chink tenacious shut,
As in a vice, the hazel nut.

The frequent blow the nut resists:
And now around he turns and twists
His anvil, that a part more weak
May feel the impression of his beak; 230
Which, by the body's forceful swing
Propell'd, makes loud and louder ring
The thicket, till the vanquish'd shell
Yields to the mighty master's spell,
And at his foot the hidden prize
Disclos'd, the precious kernel lies.

'Tis but a slight and feeble bird,
Thus far off through the thicket heard,
The little NUTHATCH. But the skill
And vigour of his pick-axe bill; 240
The force of his expanded feet,
So firm to grasp, to run so fleet,

As up and down with motion free
He climbs, descends, the forest tree ;
Nor least of all, his mingled hue
Of chestnut, buff, white, gray, and blue,
Will with the sight our care repay
In wandering by the woodland way.

Still more, if kind occasion serve
To aid us, curious to observe 250
The nimble-footed SQUIRREL: how
From tree to tree, from bough to bough,
With steerage of his bushy tail,
And grasping claws, which never fail
To seize the destin'd twig, he flings
His form in seeming flight ; or springs
Up the steep bole, with timid glance,
Mocking the insidious foot's advance ;
Or shrouded in the leafy cloke
Of hazel, beech, or kingly oak, 260
With clasping fore-feet handles fast
Acorn, or nut, or husky mast ;
Then stays his task awhile, to pry
With jealous and inquiring eye,
What steps disturb his lone domain ;
Then turns him to his task again,
Plies with sharp teeth his brisk pursuit,
And revels in the unfolded fruit.

See you the little CREEPER twine
Round yonder trunk his spiral line, 270
Intent each mossy tuft to mark,
Each crevice in the furrow'd bark,

Where haply lurks his wish'd-for food,
The insect's eggs or tiny brood?—
Scarce will you hear his frequent squeak,
Of sound monotonous and weak ;
Scarce his retiring figure see :—
As round the intervening tree
Mouse-like in size and act he steals,
The tree's impeding trunk conceals 280
His back in sober tawny dress,
Wings streak'd with brown, and silvery breast.
Nor known, nor heeded much : but sent
To man a powerful instrument,
From orchard-fruit, and garden-flower,
Hedgerow, and copse, and woodland bower,
To spoil the insect, and disarm
The canker of its pow'r to harm.
Such debt for kindness oft we owe
To those we little heed or know : 290
Such benefit from meaner things
To those of nobler semblance springs :
Such blessings flow from feeble hands,
When the Creator's will commands !

Was it the PHEASANT's whirling wing,
Which, starting up with sudden spring,
The thicket's soothing silence broke?
Was it the fowler's vollied stroke,
Which aim'd with sure and sad effect
The Pheasant's whirling pinion check'd? 300
The shot arrests him in his pride!
The blood his crimson'd plumes has died,

And stains the green and grassy ground :
 Nor aught to stanch the deadly wound
 His plumes of mingled hues avail,
 The glossy head, the streaming tail,
 The breast, which burnish'd scales infold
 Of chestnut, blue, and verdant gold.
 Nor aught avails the PARTRIDGE' fate
 To hinder, for his cherish'd mate 310
 The heart with nuptial truth inducd,
 And care parental for his brood.
 The Pheasant's fall I grieve ; but more
 The Partridge' hapless lot deplore :
 For still for death, however need
 Demand and justify the deed,
 The heart a pang of pity feels ;
 Most, when the blow most sudden steals
 On those who seem the joys to prove
 And charities of kindred love ! 320

About the white-thorn's berried bush
 The FIELD-FARE and the RED-WING'd THRUSH
 Flit in unnumber'd throngs ; or speed
 To rushy fen, or plashy mead,
 Impatient for their insect fare,
 And darken with their flight the air.

What ! do your NORTHERN banquets fail ;
 And, pois'd upon the autumnal gale,
 Seek ye beneath our milder sky
 And warmer sun a fresh supply ? 330
 Feed on, while yet the hedge-girt field
 Rich store of scarlet haws shall yield !

Feed on, while yet by frost unbound,
 Uncloth'd by snow, the marshy ground
 Rich store of insect food shall spare!
 Then southward haste! But ah! beware,
 Lest, joying in your festive cheer,
 Too long ye tempt the wintry year;
 Your flight lest sudden dangers bar,
 Your strength untimely famine mar; 340
 And strew you on the stranger's shore,
 To seek your vernal haunts no more:
 No more to cross the tranquil seas,
 And view your native maple trees,
 And pines that wave above the rills,
 That fall from huge NORWEGIAN hills;
 Or roam by lonely SWEDISH mere
 Your groves of branching juniper!

He too, full fain as now to share
 Your haunts, your spoils, the chattering STARE, 350
 With feet that lightly brush the ground,
 With wing revolving round and round.
 Whirl within whirl, in spiral flight,
 Ere on his evening couch he light,
 Oft shares your doom, together lost
 By driving snow, or pinching frost.
 What boots him then his speckled vest;
 In black and green and purple drest?
 His whistle clear, and strong, and shrill,
 Beyond what human lip can trill? 360
 And wondrous faculty to reach
 Sounds incomplete of human speech?

Yes, pretty bird ; thy manners gay,
 With many an arch and cunning way, '
 Commend thee oft, a living toy,
 A playmate to the sportive boy.
 Though for his care no trifling cost
 Thou pay, the price thy freedom lost,
 Thou'rt sav'd from ills that frequent wait
 On thy expos'd precarious state, 370
 The gun, the net, the season's strife ;
 And blest with shelter, food, and life.
 Nor is such price confin'd to thee :
 'Tis paid by all in just degree,
 Who scape, by education tamed,
 The ills of nature unreclaimed,
 The safety, comforts, joys to know,
 The rules of social life bestow.
 But thee thy wicker bars restrain,
 Our wider range the law's domain. 380

Seek we the MARSH. Or ere your eye
 From far his active form descry,
 Your ear amid his noisy sport
 Will tell the LAPWING's lov'd resort.
 For now from field or sandy shore
 In congregated crowds they pour,
 Bound o'er the land now here, now there,
 Or sport and frolick in the air
 With restless wing ; or tap the ground,
 In hope the oft-repeated sound 390
 May penetrate the shaking mould,
 And fright the earth-worm from his hold ;

Or mark with sharp inquiring ken,
 When from the subterranean den
 In part appears the expected prey,
 And drag it writhing to the day.
 Hark to his cries! the ear they greet
 With loud incessant call, "Pe-weet."
 And by the admiring eye is seen
 With purple gloss'd his coat of green; 100
 Bent upward with elastick spring
 His darker crest; and flapping wing,
 Which bears him swift away to shun
 Suspected steps, half flight half run.
 Poor bird! They say, his nestling brood
 To skreen, if burching dog intrude,
 He'll strike his foe, then feign a wound,
 And fluttering run along the ground
 A devious course, if so his feet
 The keen pursuer's aim may cheat. 410
 Who would not praise such blameless art,
 Essay'd on fond AFFECTION's part?
 'Tis nature's warning call to save
 From harm the progeny she gave;
 The voice of Providence, to prove
 The value of parental love!

There too perhaps, although more rare
 While yet the groves their foliage wear,
 For till the wintry months draw nigh,
 He northward loves a cooler sky, 420
 Recluse in CUMBRIA's humid fells,
 Or SCOTIA's dank and rushy dells,

Or where o'er vale or mountain's head
 Green ERIN's heathery swamps are spread ;
 You'll hear remote the feeble pipe
 Shrill sounding of the wakeful SNIPE,
 And catch receding from the view
 His spots of black and rusty hue ;
 As starting from his reedy fen
 He flies abrupt the approach of men, 430
 And with quick wing and zigzag flight
 Dazzles the unpractis'd fowler's sight.
 What others tell, the Muse recites :
 For, child of peace, she not delights
 The fowler's fellowship to claim,
 Nor deals she in the slaughterous game :
 Content to take for needful food
 The creatures, God pronounces good ;
 But not with blood her hands to stain,
 And make a pastime of their pain ! 440

There too the bird you'll haply find,
 Of larger size, congenial kind,
 Fresh from the BALTIC'S sounding shores,
 Perchance from SCOTLAND'S hills and moors,
 From GRAMPIAN heights and MORAY'S shades,
 To sojourn in our southern glades.
 The marsh his nightly haunt : the wood
 Within its secret solitude,
 Which on the kind their NAME bestows,
 Supplies their place of day's repose, 450
 Where moss-grown runnels oozing well
 Through bosky glen or hollow dell,

There rest they, till the closing day
 The signal gives to seek their prey,
 Where the long worm and shrouded fly
 Close in their marshy burrows lie:
 Then issue forth by nature's power,
 To banquet through the midnight hour,
 Till the gray dawn their ardour daunt,
 And warn them to their woodland haunt 460
 MYSTERIOUS POW'ER! which guides by night
 Through the dark wood the illumin'd sight;
 Which prompts them by the unerring smell
 The appointed prey's abode to tell,
 Bore with long bill the investing mould,
 And feel, and from the secret hold
 Dislodge the reptile spoil! But who
 Can look creation's volume through,
 And not fresh proofs at every turn
 Of the CREATOR'S mind discern; 470
 The end to which his actions tend;
 The means adapted to the end;
 The reasoning thought; the effective skill;
 And, ruling all, the Almighty will?

Lo, as we look above, around,
 Signs upon signs of God abound!

On wings that mock the vollied storm,
 High overhead in wedgelike form,
 Or in the column's lengthen'd row,
 More near earth's surface stooping low 480

Their pennons through the dusky night,
The WILD-DUCKS steer their annual flight.
From craggy cape, and winding creek,
And lonely mountain isles, that break
The ocean's broad expanse, that roars
Round SCANDINAVIA'S BOREAL shores,
Disperst in many a rambling band
O'er southern marsh, and lake, and strand,
A numerous tribe alike they claim,
Each race distinct, the WILD-DUCK'S name: 490
But each its proper marks assumes,
Shape, habits, haunts, and varied plumes;
Though on their varied plumes' array
Each with distinctive tints display,
Of all alike the common note,
A mirrour bright, a beauty spot,
And with metallick radiance fling
Effulgence from the burnish'd wing.

Whether the common WILD DRAKE show
His throat and breast's empurpled glow, 500
Mixt with the verdant tints that deck
His glossy head and wavy neck:
Or the loud GADWALL, scale on scale
O'erlaid, his coat of feathery mail:
Or SHELDRAKE'S black green-tinctur'd head,
And gorget white and breastplate red:
Or POCHARD'S gray and mottled back,
With russet head and corslet black:
Or HE that wears depending down
His purple neck a tufted crown: 510
Or whistling WIGEON, with inlay
Of undulations black and gray

Chequering his streak'd and dappled coat,
 With cream-like head, and chestnut throat :
 HE of white cheeks and GOLDEN-EYED,
 Of white and black alternate pied,
 Matching the whistling Wigeon's cries :
 Or HE in garb of many dies,
 Dark but with crescents white between,
 Like hero of the magick scene, 520
 Equipt the crowd's applause to win,
 The parti-colour'd HARLEQUIN :
 Apt for his shelly food to rake
 The oozy sludge the SPOONBILL-DRAKE :
 The broad-bill'd SHOVELLER's wing of blue :
 With marks of green and yellow hue,
 Whose light-brown breast dark spots aneal,
 Least of his kind the clacking TEAL :
 Or HE who head and breast and back
 Clothes with a suit of VELVET BLACK : 530
 Or he that suit of VELVET DARK
 Who varies with a twofold MARK,
 White-spotted on the wing and cheek :
 Or whom his lengthen'd plumes bespeak
 Of all his kind most graceful, he
 The PINTAIL, PHEASANT OF THE SEA :
 Or he, with loud and clanging cry
 Though rarely in our southern sky
 Be spread his black and chestnut sail,
 The SHELDRAKE of the SWALLOW TAIL : 540
 Or loth his northern isles to quit,
 Though by his pow'rs of motion fit
 To take the flectest, longest flight,
 The EIDER, who his plumage white

Of all that graze the ocean fields
The lightest, softest, warmest yields,
Profusely from the living breast
Pluck'd off to line the grassy nest ;
'Thence borne by oft repeated stealth
It forms the island plunderer's wealth, 550
Our artificial wants' supply ;
And for the stately canopy
Means of voluptuous ease bestows,
The couch of indolent repose.

So more or less of varied race
The Ducks their annual voyage trace,
In marshall'd ranks of wedge or line,
Obedient to the leader's sign.

Alike in wedgelike ranks aloft,
The GEESE with downy plumage soft, 560
Or in the long-drawn column's range,
As nature's dictate prompts the change,
Speed to the south on clanging pens
To winter in the marshy fens.

The GREY LAG 'GOOSE, which wing'd of old
The cloth-yard shaft of Bowyer bold,
Of docile manners mild, the base,
So reckon'd, of the household race,
Which graze around the farmer's home,
O'er stubble field and common roam ; 570
But chief in eastern fens reside ;
Broad LINCOLN'S treasure and her pride :
He on whose bill imprest is seen,
Thence named, the semblance of a BEAN :

He who of white the double print
 Bears on his neck, the dusky BRENT:
 He his WHITE FRONTLET's shining mark
 Who circles with a margin dark:
 And whilome deem'd from sea-born shell
 To drop full-fledg'd the BERNACLE; 580
 Distinct his mottled plumes' array
 With crescent rims, black, white, and gray;
 All white his cheeks; with sable spread
 His neck, and breast, and slender head.

Stragglers besides, but these the most,
 Arrang'd in duly-marshall'd host,
 In ARCTICK regions nurtur'd, thence
 Now first their wintry flight commence,
 In *wedgelike* troop right onward bear,
 Or cleave with *streaming file* the air. 590
 The careful leader's gathering cry,
 Behind, the attentive train's reply,
 Alternate, as they forward steer
 Their rapid course, give mutual cheer.

Now too with sharp and sawlike bill
 Cylindrical, the season chill
 From their far dwellings in the north
 Calls duly the GOOSANDERS forth:
 Apt on the salt deep's ooze to ride,
 And swiftly o'er its surface glide; 600
 More apt the yielding wave to rive,
 Deep through the liquid chambers dive,
 Then with long pause, and far away
 Again the emerging tuft display:

Ilim with the feather's pendent crest,
Neck purpled green, and RUDDY BREAST;
With breast of white the DIVER DUN;
And Fancy-likened to the nun
Of CARMEL, though a jet-black hue
Inlay his white, the white-robed SMEW. 610

From ICELAND, where to horse and hound,
By moulting pinions to the ground
Confin'd, the else aspiring race
Yields objects for the August chase,
The prize of downy plumes to win;
And thence transferr'd the fleece-like skin
Man's frame with grateful warmth arrays:
From wild KAMSCHATKA's cliffs and bays,
From LAPLAND snows, and NORWAY lakes,
The SWAN his airy voyage takes: 620
Unlike his kindred birds, whose mien
Majestick decks this inland scene,
Content with bounded sway to rule
The precincts of their rushy pool,
And row with arched neck sedate
Their silent and sequester'd state;
Nor sound to break that silence still
Is echoed from their shallow bill.
But less of form, more light of wing,
These high with flight aspiring spring. 630
The whistle strong, and deep-drawn whoop,
Tell to the ear the passing troop;
While from their proud aerial height
The plumes, as falling snow-flakes white,

And broad expanse of wing defy
The sharp ken of the straining eye.

But see, for not from viewless height,
But, wheeling low with swooping flight,
Flaps his long wings the loud SEA-MEW!
His back and sides of ashen hue, 640
And wings of fleecy brightness gleam
Slow waving in the sunny beam.
Of all the tribes of ocean none
Less prompt the haunts of men to shun:
None more alert in frequent flocks
At winter's call their cavern'd rocks
To quit, and from the sea-wash'd shore
Fly INLAND: there to hover o'er
Freshet, or stream, or running brook,
The trout's lov'd haunt; or with the rook 650
The new-turn'd furrow's banquet share,
Nor for their native billows care.

Nor wants there now in strange array
Accoutred, with his mantle gray
Thrown o'er his shoulders, breast, and back,
The rest attir'd in speckless black,
Head, wings, and tail, and legs below,
Thence fitly styl'd, the HOODED CROW.
In Britain's southern fields unknown
Through summer months, he makes his own 660
Frequented by his native flocks,
ERIN's and SCOTIA's northern rocks,

And HEBRID ISLES remote ; but most,
 Detach'd from SCOTIA'S mainland coast,
 Where northward far the ocean foams
 Round SHETLAND'S ISLES, and ORKNEY'S HOLMS.

There beyond all his kind, the name
 That marks his kind 'tis his to claim :
 There, beyond all his brethren known,
 The CROW'S the HOODED CROW alone : 670
 There his abode he holds ; and there
 In nuptial league each wedded pair,
 (Such league is theirs,) on rock or tree
 Attend their nestling progeny :
 Their home the sea-wash'd shore ; their food
 The refuse of the salt sea flood,
 Won from the inmates of the deep,
 Or done to death the sickly sheep.
 But now to other haunts they roam,
 Make of our south their wintry home, 680
 And with their brethren's distant bands
 Expatiate o'er the fields and sands,
 Like friars of orders black and grey,
 Expectant of their helpless prey.

Facts such as these our senses know.
 But why alone the HOODED CROW
 Of all his kindred tribe should flock
 In April to the northern rock :
 Or why of all his kindred race *
 Alone the HOODED CROW should trace 690
 His passage on OCTOBER gales
 To southern shores and southern vales ;
 And with his sable brethren share
 Like habits, dwelling-place, and fare :

'Tis what the philosophick mind
 Máy yearn to know, but fail to find.
 'Tis like the writing on the wall
 In King BELSHAZZAR'S festal hall*;
 In nature's cord a tangled "knot†;"
 That he, though wise, who made it not, 700
 May strive, but strive in vain, to spell
 The meaning of that miracle.

He too the THRUSH, who bears imprest
 The silver CRESCENT on his BREAST,
 His plumes beside of sable bright
 Stamp'd with that curve of silvery white:—
 Why, while our inmates through the year
 The THROSTLE and the BLACKBIRD near
 Our homesteads still preserve their home,
 Nor e'er from SOUTHERN ENGLAND roam; 710
 Their brother of the crescent white,
 Why does he thither wing his flight
 But with the breath of vernal air;
 Nor linger, but forthwith repair
 To CORNWALL'S moors, and DEVON'S vales,
 The heaths and rocks of rugged WALES,
 To DERBY'S tors abrupt, that shroud
 Their summit in the misty cloud,
 To ERIN'S mountain glens and rills,
 To AYRSHIRE streams, and GRAMPIAN hills? 720
 Now in OCTOBER'S fading day
 Why does he thither wing his way,
 Again with rapid glance explore
 His path by SOUTHERN ENGLAND'S shore,

* Dan. v. 7.

† Ver. 12. Marg. trans.

Nor linger, but forthwith advance
O'er the salt strait to adverse FRANCE;
And leave the brethren of his kind,
The Black-bird and the Thrush behind,
Without his social aid to cheer
The later as the earlier year?

730

'Twas thine the first, observant WHITE,
The RING-NECK'D OUSEL's passing flight,
As to and fro at seasons due
O'er SELBORNE's hanging woods he flew,
To note, as rul'd by certain laws,
But leave untold the mediate cause:
Sagacious with regardful eyes
All nature's works to scrutinise;
Too wise, the counsels to decide,
Which o'er all nature's works preside:
Contented oft the darkness thrown
About thy mental sight to own,
And much to HIS high will refer,
Whose hands creation's sceptre bear!

740

But stay! O'er yonder LAKE the while
What bird about that wooded isle
With pendent feet, and pinions slow,
Is seen his ponderous length to row?
'Tis the tall HERON's awkward flight,
His crest of black, and neck of white,
Far sunk his gray blue wings between,
And giant legs of murky green.
His tribe is seaward far away:
And he remains, as peasants say,

750

About their summer haunts to dwell
 On guard, a faithful sentinel:
 Till spring again with genial smile
 Recall them to their native isle,
 On their lov'd oaks' wide spreading crown
 Aloft to build their close-set town, 760
 Their brood to hatch, their younglings rear;
 Then monish'd hence as now to steer
 Far off their migratory way,
 For richer floods and ampler prey.
 So without words by secret sign
 Speaks to their sense the voice divine!

For these we see, for thousands more
 Who skim the wave, or pace the shore,
 Who to and fro alternate range,
 And in DUE SEASON INTERCHANGE 770
 The north and south, the sea and land.
 The freshet and the briny strand,
 Now bent to catch their finny food,
 Now careful for their future brood,
 Intent a safer home to share,
 Or breathe a more congenial air;
 And still from each migration find
 The succour suited to their kind:
 What foresight for their wants provides!
 What counsel o'er their plans presides! 780
 What sense instinctive, more than art
 Or reason, can the pow'r impart,
 To calculate the appointed time,
 Far off to know the destin'd clime,

When from their haunts to flee, and where
Seek refuge through the pathless air!

O WISDOM, GOODNESS INFINITE!
Whose works are precious in thy sight;
Who mad'st, and who dost care for all!
'To thee thy living creatures call: 790
Though speechless be the call, thy hand
Thou deign'st in bounty to expand,
Their sufferings feel, their wants redress,
And fill them all with plenteousness!
They take the course THY WILL ordains.
O, where that will conspicuous reigns,
Obedient as the watchful bird,
Be *mine* to mark thy heavenly word:
Like him to follow where thou guid'st;
Like him to take what thou provid'st; 800
On thee with reason's voice withal,
Passing his speechless cry, to call;
Take, where thou wilt, my fit abode,
And trust for succour to my God!

Mark you? Alarm'd with upward wing,
As near we draw, the MALLARDS spring.
Wild, but DOMESTICATED here
On the calm lake their brood they rear,
Well-pleas'd no more afar to stray,
And seek again their Arctick way. 810
Yet lose they not, with change of place,
The wildness of their pristine race:
So up, on hurried wing they start,
And forward like the whizzing dart,

High through the air tumultuous stream,
 With outstretch'd neck, and noisy scream.
 With silent flight across the pool
 On wing and foot the GALLINULE
 For safety flits to lowly bush,
 Or lurks within the sheltering rush. 820
 Thus nature prompts diverging ways!
 Some soar, expos'd to publick gaze:
 More safe to others, as more sweet,
 The secret path, the close retreat!

Unus'd aloft to soar, but fleet
 With OARAGE of the handlike feet,
 Most apt the liquid mass to strike
 With powerful stroke, direct, oblique,
 See, where across the lake she rows
 Her crested form; and, as she goes, 830
 Full of maternal fears and cares,
 Lodg'd on her back her nestlings bears;
 The FEMALE GREBE! Her glossy breast
 Sleek plumes of sattiny white invest,
 Wave-proof: and hangs her shoulders down.
 Down back and wings, of dusky brown
 A mantling TIPPET. Ah, forbear,
 Nor with intent remorseless dare,
 Thou who with gun and gun-craft tried
 Creep'st cautious by the water side, 840
 Dare not, while thus engag'd, with rude
 Assault to sever from her brood,
 And kill, or worse, disabled maim,
 Charg'd with her young, the anxious dam!—

'Tis vain! The deadly shot is sped:
 And on the pool the dam outspread
 Floats lifeless! From her shoulders flung
 In the death-throe, the orphan young
 Disperse, and seek, as best they can,
 Refuge from persecuting man!

850

Believing beast and fowl decreed
 By heav'n in man's behoof to bleed,
 The Muse nice feelings o'er-refin'd
 Affects not; but to duties kind
 Alive, the sympathetick heart
 Mourns with involuntary start
 Thus rent affection's tender pledge,
 And holds such death a sacrilege!

And lo! where dives the hungry Coor.
 I know him by his sable suit,
 Streak'd with the pinion's border white,
 And o'er his bill the frontlet bright.
 Again he dives: you well might know,
 There's store of finny prey below,
 Ev'n heard you not the frequent dash
 Break the still lake with sudden plash;
 What time emerging from the deep,
 The FISH with spring elastick LEAP;
 Nor saw the rippling motion pass
 In circles o'er the wavy glass.
 The wavy glass is smooth again:
 And mark! nor wrinkle now, nor stain,
 Disturbs the CRYSTAL MIRROR'S face;
 Where in illusive traits we trace

860

870

Complete, as limner's brush can show,
 The sunbright sky's cerulean glow.
 The margin, that the waters lave,
 The flags, that on the margin wave,
 The sheep and cows and pastures green,
 And circling hills are pictur'd seen. 880
 Seen is the hill's o'ershadowing pride
 In all its TINTS DIVERSIFIED,
 Which autumn's glowing touch induces
 With richest robe of thousand hues.
 Alas! Those thousand hues declare
 Corruption's work is busy there;
 Forerunners they of winter's gloom,
 A victim garnish'd for the tomb!

Too true, too true! For as we tread
 The woodland path, behold, o'erspread 890
 With LEAVES is all the slippery way,
 Unseen consumption's early prey.
 Nor flow'r is left to glad the sight,
 Save that its streaks of pink and white
 The CRANESBILL here and there displays:
 And MUSHROOMS spread their gill-like rays,
 Dispersing wide the powdery seed;
 Past by the crowd with little heed,
 While curious eyes admiring view
 Their structure, and their varied hue, 900
 Or red, or yellow, white or brown,
 The clublike stem, the pent-house crown.
 No mine through nature's broad domain,
 But yields, when wrought, a precious vein.

But these are losing now apace,
 The year's last boast, their short-liv'd grace!

Aside the club-like pillars stoop,
 And with contracted fibres droop:
 The pent-house crowns so smooth present
 Comprest, indented, upward bent 910
 A shrivell'd disk, a jagged rim:
 And clouded colours, dark and dim,
 Succeeding to the early glow
 Of transitory brilliance, show,
 These symptoms of the year's decay
 Themselves are melting fast away.
 As the bright locks of silver, shed
 Presageful on the aged head,
 Receding soon their covering spare
 Change for a surface bald and bare. 920

Still ruin speeds. Ev'n now a blast
 Has o'er the lingering foliage past,
 And round our steps the forest pours
 Its gorgeous dress in frequent showers:
 As full and frequent as the RAIN,
 Which threatens soon to fall amain,
 And with a veil the landscape shroud,
 Impervious as the morning cloud.
 Such oft is LIFE'S BRIEF DAY! At first
 'Tis wrapt in gloom: but, that disperst, 930
 All radiant doth its noontide shine:
 In gloom its evening hours decline.
 O for those days, from morn till night
 When all is gladness, all is light!

Enough! Behoves we homeward haste,
 Content and grateful to have past

Not pleasureless, throughout our way,
 Nor useless, this OCTOBER DAY.
 BLEST, who can soften care, or find
 Employment for the vacant mind, 940
 In nature's scenes! THrice BLEST is he
 Who forward casts his eyes to see,
 In all that through the waters move,
 In earth beneath and heaven above,
 The sovereign Power, who nature made,
 The AUTHOR in his works display'd:
 And, as before the temple shrine
 In vision came the voice divine
 To youthful Samuel's nightly ear;
 Hears, rapt in thought, or seems to hear, 950
 Though void of language and of speech,
 God's voice from all creation preach!

Then does the faithful dutious heart
 Take up the listening Samuel's part,
 Full fain to hear his Maker speak:
 And with submissive spirit meek
 Pursues the future prophet's strain,
 Invokes the warning voice again,
 Owns the blest sign, howe'er conferr'd,
 And welcomes thus the heavenly word*."

"Speak, for thy servant heareth, LORD!"—How
 varied are the ways,
 Whereby thy wisdom, O my God, the truth to man
 conveys.

* 1 Sam. iii. 4, 9.

'Tis thine to make thy will be known by many a
speaking sign :

Thy will, howe'er reveal'd, to heed with answering
heart be mine !

Thou speakest in creation's works ! Where'er I gaze
abroad,

In nature's miracles I hear the voice of nature's
God :

I hear thy voice of bounteousness breath'd in the
silent shower,

And in the awful thunder storm I hear thy voice of
power.

Thou speakest in this chequer'd scene of human joys
and woes,

Where restlessness is twin to guilt, to holiness
repose : 970

And oft though clouds of mystery perplex my feeble
sight,

I hear thee say that Thou art good, and all will yet
be bright.

Thou speakest in thy book ! With words man's
eloquence above,

I hear Thee of affection tell, surpassing woman's
love :

Of sinners from destruction saved, of blood in ransom
given,

Of faith by charity matured, and hope that rests in
heaven.

Thou speakest in the secret heart! 'Mid vice and
folly's din

The whisper of the still small voice I hear my breast
within.

And when my feet would turn aside, I hear my
guardian say,

Right onward for the narrow gate, right onward
hold the way. 980

"Speak, Lord; thy servant heareth Thee!"—Nor
sound I crave, nor sight,

Which rapt thy chosen seers of old in visions of
the night.

But to my watchful eye be still Thy works, Thy
word, display'd,

With Thy vicegerent in my breast, inform'd by Thee,
to aid:

And when by conscience' inward voice Thou wouldest,
Lord, be heard,

Or by Thy works of providence, or by Thy living
word:

From earth's obstructions purify my not-unwilling
ear,

And grant that what Thou speakest thus, Thy
servant's soul may hear! 986

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NOVEMBER.

ENVELOPED in a murky cloud,
With tearful eyes and wailings loud,
NOVEMBER takes his sullen road,
Thick with the forest's honours strow'd ;
A wither'd woodbine decks his brow,
His hand a sapless oaken bough.

The darken'd day's impatient flight,
The o'erhanging storms, the approach of night,
Warn us with heedful eye to watch
The hours' precarious course, and catch, 10
As best we may, the favouring time
For action in our watery clime.

It likes me well, this GARDEN WALK*!
No, GLOOMY MONTH, thou shalt not balk
My thirst for exercise and air,
Long as thy rains in kindness spare
The velvet of the terraced mound,
The shelter'd garden's western bound.

Above my head, a double row,
Tall elms their arms o'erarching throw 20
With pintrees mixed ; for pleasure made,
And use, a rural colonnade ;
Where in amusive pastime join'd,
The social may with social mind

* This " Month " was written at a friend's house, and his garden is here particularly intended.

Converse ; or rapt in thought, alone
The pensive commune with his own.

A coppice northward shuts the scene :
Bright laurels skirt with eastern screen
The well-trod moss ; and down the hill,
Few paces off, a babbling rill
Its course the hollow banks between
Holds onward, rather heard than seen.
Beyond the fence, abruptly bank'd,
With moss and gadding ivy prank'd,
Aloft a mountain on the west,
Steep, and with hanging umbrage drest,
Lifts from the dawn its swelling form,
A safeguard from the seaward storm.
Bright to the midday sun alone
The distant view is open thrown,
Where the pleas'd eye may roam at will
O'er stream and meadow, vale and hill.
So here my pleasant path I choose,
And gaze and listen, pause and muse.

30

Throughout the year's still varying range
More swift, more mark'd, more perfect CHANGE
Stamps not the landscape's alter'd face ;
Than now the eyes regretful trace
From mid OCTOBER's noontides clear,
To dull NOVEMBER dark and drear ;
From AUTUMN's many-colour'd dress,
To first-born WINTER's nakedness.
Tho' quick the change that flings a robe
Of verdure o'er the vernal globe,

-50

And in the desert bids arise
 Delicious Eden's paradise :
 More quick meseems is wav'd the wand
 Of desolation o'er the land,
 And, where fair Eden's garden smil'd,
 Behind it leaves a dreary wild. 60

When last the MOON with aspect dim
 Show'd o'er yon hill her silver rim,
 No tree in all the hanging wood,
 But rob'd in glossy vesture stood.
 And when she fill'd her circle bright,
 And rose above the wood-crown'd height,
 Still not a tree, that caught her beam,
 But cast it back with richer gleam.
 Again her silver rim is seen,
 But glancing thro' that scanty skreen ;— 70
 And, when her full-orb'd face is shown,
 'Twill light on leafless boughs alone.

See, where he stands, who round him flung
 His arms with winged foliage hung,
 The smooth-stem'd ASH ! From branch and spray
 Those winged leaves are flown away ;
 And nought remains to speak his pride,
 Save that at hand his beauteous bride
 Still on her key-like bunches shows
 The pendent seed in dusky rows, 80
 While from her frame is torn apace
 Hers, with her partner's verdant grace.
 Together in one fate conjoin'd,
 Thus sons and daughters of mankind

Have joy'd in fortune's sunny hour,
And droop beneath bereavement's pow'r!

And he, who late his honours bore,
Tho' blotch'd and blurr'd, the SYCAMORE,
Stands bare with branches far outspread:
And bare her tall and slender head
With upright shoots the POPLAR rears,
Of growth mature, a child in years.
Nor *this* her shapely form and fair,
Nor *that* his more majestick air,
Aids to escape the common fall
By nature's laws decreed for all.

90

Bare is the TREE that SPAIN sends forth
To grace our less congenial north,
If SPAIN indeed of right pretend
That goodly denizen to send.

100

Unless with some more sage you hold
That in our BRITAIN'S woods of old
FREEBORN the stately CHESTNUT grew;
Whence a rich store our fathers drew
The spacious barn to raise, or crown,
In castled fort or towered town,
With open-rafter'd roof the wall
Of hallow'd church or scutcheon'd hall.

Hence LONDON saw of antique guise
Her fram'd and panell'd dwellings rise,
Stage above stage, projecting more
And more each fresh successive floor.
Hence thou beheld'st thy palace rear
Its hall, imperial WESTMINSTER,
Scene of the gorgeous RICHARDS feasts;
Where o'er ten thousand Christmas guests

110

Unnumber'd cressets blaz'd aloof,
Dependent from the high-arch'd roof.
Hence did our English woods present,
But most the wavy hills of KENT, 120
GERARD, to thy admiring sight .
The CHESTNUT's bulk and towering height.
Hence lately stood, or haply stands
Ev'n now in TORTWORTH's lordly lands,
And stood in bygone days of yore,
(What time the English bowmen bore
The keen assault of Norman knights,)
The landmark of manorial rights,
Proud of his Saxon ancestry,
And stature great, the CHESTNUT TREE ; 130
Nor through broad England's woods for age
With that can all her sons engage.

Howe'er it be, if British-born
Our parks his feathering leaves adorn,
Or but with growth adoptive rise ;
Bare is the CHESTNUT's stately size
Dismantled of his summer grace :
And bare, of oriental race
Is HE, who proudly dares to claim
Of alien stock a rival name, 140
But rival none in pleasant fruit :
Tho' still around the well-graz'd root
Of each, the finger'd leaves among,
The ground their prickly seed coats throng.
This prompt to yield from twofold chest
Its globes in white and russet drest,
Priz'd for its fancied worth to feed
And heal the breath-afflicted STEED :

That its four valves unfolding wide
 Where seemly order'd, side by side, 150
 With bristly hair, and heron-neck'd,
 Its triple seeds are fix'd erect.

More priz'd the FRUIT the pilgrim sees
 Borne on the wood-way'd PYRENEES:
 More priz'd, where southern sunbeams shine
 On thee, ITALIAN APENNINE:
 Or where, SICILIAN ÆTNA'S boast,
 Grows the fam'd tree, itself a host,
 Bencath whose wide embowering wood
 A hundred mounted knights have stood. 160

There welcome to the peasant's shed
 The CHESTNUT thrives, his daily bread:
 Degenerate here, and shrunk, and small,
 Resembling more the mast that fall
 From yon bright BEECH, congenerous tree;
 Where fondly lingering still we see,
 As loth the parent stock to leave,
 Tho' chang'd, the clustering foliage cleave.
 There cling they still; and there shall cling,
 Till a new race successive spring, 170
 Their hold relax, their room supply,
 Like them in turn to fade and die,
 Like them in turn to yield their place,
 Supplanted by a livelier race.
 And thus the ranks of human kind
 Fill like the leaves their place assign'd:
 The post the bygone race had held,
 Another holds; till, thence propell'd,

It yields before the next, that all
 May rise in turn, in turn may fall. 180
 O, like thy leaves might all fulfil,
 Fair tree, their sovereign Maker's will!

Nor yet, her airy branches left
 Of all their slender foliage reft,
 Bare is the BIRCH with silver bark:
 Nor bare the kindred ALDER dark,
 With signs of future blossoms hung
 The remnants of the past among:
 Amid disaster's ruin bare
 Germs of sweet hope and promise fair! 190

Nor yet the early fall bereaves
 The WILLOWS of their lance-like leaves;
 Where o'er the mead in stunted ranks
 They line the streamlet's formal banks;
 Or, from the axe exempted, spread
 A broader shade, a loftier head.

Such loftier head, such broader shade,
 More rarely grows in forest glade
 Of ENGLAND, or her water'd meads;
 Where still the blade remorseless shreds 200
 The limbs of each aspiring tree.
 But justly claims more high degree
 The WILLOW on the sister coast,
 Green ERIN'S beauty and her boast.
 There with its native depth of shade,
 Unscath'd by man, nor disarray'd
 By autumn, yet she wears her charms,
 Her towering head and branching arms.
 With that LITTLE TREE, whose branches slim
 Hang from the lonely water's brim, 210

And in the dimpled surface steep
 Their pendent leaves, and droop, and weep.
 So droop'd, so wept, in days of yore,
 On BABYLON'S far-distant shore,
 JUDEA'S captive sons! The thought
 Of thee, O prostrate ZION, brought
 Tears to their eyes, and fill'd them there
 With sullen woe and dumb despair;
 As for their harps, they all unstrung
 Upon the WILLOW TREES were hung! 220

Nor yet does winter quite o'erwhelm
 Thee, beauteous and aspiring ELM,
 Whose leaves of yellow-tinted green
 Still glimmer 'mid the darkling scene.
 So on some youth: consumption's prey,
 Or lovely maid, deep-fix'd decay
 Spreads o'er the cheek a hectic die,
 And lightens in the sparkling eye.
 Ah, treacherous tint, illusive light,
 Signs sad and sure of threatening night! 230

And see, with manly strength indued,
 The peerless SOVEREIGN of the wood
 Yet bears aloft his regal crown,
 And flowing robe of solemn brown.
 As he his subject trees among,
 Of texture close, and fabrick strong,
 More late his vernal grace unfolds,
 His autumn's pride he longer holds.
 No hasty youth, that starts away,
 Exhausted ere the turn of day; 240
 But form'd till evening to endure,
 Of parts less forward, but more sure.

Thence fit to quit the subject wood
At Britain's call, and rule the flood.

Meanwhile along the pathway's edge,
Deep ruin marks the wither'd HEDGE.
Below, with leaves the turf is strown,
Mix'd with the FIR-TREE'S scaly CONE.
Beside, the flow'rless bank's ascent
Waves with the brown and sapless bent. 250
Bare are the SLOE and WHITETHORN there,
Of leaves the EGLANTINE is bare.
But still 'mid destitution glows
The bright red berry of the rose:
Still glows, on leafless stem 'forlorn,
With red less bright the berried thorn.
Still with dark violet-colour'd fruit,
And deep green leaves, and straggling shoot.
The fence the prickly BRAMBLE robes:
And PRIVET, hung with purple globes, 260
His foliage stains with changeful hue
Of tawny bright, and glossy blue.
Still from their limber tendrils' end
Fresh leaves the climbing WOODBINES send.
Still yields the FURZE his golden bloom,
Tho' scant; as fair November's gloom
To brighten with a garland gay,
Stol'n from the brow of jocund May;
As loth to leave the whole domain
Renounc'd of nature's floral reign. 270

They're welcome, 'mid the general wreck,
These REMNANTS that the landscape deck.

But 'tis a mournful thought withal
 How soon these remnants too must fall.
 'Tis nature's ineffectual strife
 Faint hold to keep on parting life:
 The struggle of the fleeting breath,
 Which soon must fail subdued by death'.

But still more LIVELY OBJECTS cheer
 The wintry prospect dull and drear; 289
 Where its free course along the veins
 The vegetable blood maintains,
 And leaves of vivid tint supply
 A refuge for the wandering eye.
 So 'mid the seasons of distress,
 Which on this world of trial press,
 To solace the most dreary scenes,
 Now and again there intervenes
 A spot, whereon the soul opprest
 May find a refuge and a rest. 290

The PLEASURE GROUND'S smooth-shaven space
 The SHRUBBERY'S lowlier children grace.
 That, which my pathway borders here,
 The scentless LAUREL, never sere:
 And that which bore in classick day
 The laurel's name, the scented BAY.
 In compass wide, of stature tall,
 The dark-leav'd plant of PORTUGAL.
 And LAURUSTINUS gay, embost
 With gems that brave the storm and frost: 300
 And ARBUTUS, that hangs its shoots
 With milkwhite flow'rs, and scarlet fruits.

From CHINA nam'd, the ROSE of die
 And figure grateful to the eye,
 But no sweet scents within it dwell
 To gratify the longing smell;
 Most valued that its summer bloom
 It holds unhurt 'mid winter's gloom:
 And o'er the trellis'd mansion led,
 Or the meek peasant's cottage shed, 310
 Bright mid o'crarching wreaths of snow
 Its flow'rs with vernal beauty glow.

Nor little prize we, though with flower
 It bloom not in the wintry hour,
 That moisture-loving plant, which bore
 Its name and race from PONTICK shore,
 The "ROSE-TREE;" tho' nor scent it knows,
 Nor figure of our British rose.
 See, from a central pillar spread,
 Diverges many a cluster'd head: 320
 Each cluster'd head profusely showers
 Its summer bloom of purple flowers;
 And ruffs of winter foliage deck,
 Now blossomless, each cinctur'd neck.

Along the ground, beneath the wood,
 Where late with blossom'd stem it stood,
 Its head the bright PERVINKLE vails,
 And far and wide its verdure trails;
 Its leaves of verdure bright, but mixt
 With flow'rs of brilliant blue betwixt. 330
 Its verdure trails the IVY shoot
 Along the ground from root to root;

Or climbing high with random maze
 O'er elm, and ash, and alder strays;
 And round each trunk a network weaves
 Fantastick; and each bough with leaves
 Of countless shapes intwines, and studs
 With pale green blooms, and half-form'd buds.

The ivy, of our native flow'rs
 That now among the latest pours 340

Its pale green bloom, and ripens its seed
 Of black and shining balls, to feed,
 Impervious to the winter's frost,
 The little birds' afflicted host.

The ivy, fairest plant to seize
 And promptest, on the neighbouring trees;
 O'er bole and branch, with leaves that shine
 All glossy bright, tenacious twine;
 And the else naked woodland scene
 Clothe with a raiment fresh and green. 350

Fair is that ivy twine to see!
 But as you love the goodly tree,
 O rend away the clasping wreath:
 'Twill pay the kind support with death.
 Ah, that beneath such semblance fair
 Should lurk conceal'd such deadly snare!

From starlike tufts of leaves, that spot
 The pastur'd field, or garden plot,
 Lo, the meek FLOW'ER, whose buds unfold
 Its tubes in disks of cluster'd gold, 360
 'Mid rays of white and crimson die,
 Nam'd of the DAY'S expanded EYE.
 Among the first the flowery prime
 To greet; the dull autumnal time

Among its last remains to cheer;
 And still, amid the wintry year,
 Tho' with the night her bloom she skreen
 Close wrapt within its bow'r of green,
 Prepar'd to hail the sunny ray,
 And bare her bosom to the day!

370

Above, the HOLLY glads the scene
 With prickly leaves of glossy green:
 Bright green throughout; or trimly round
 With rim of gold or silver bound;
 And girt with balls of scarlet die,
 Boon nature's provident supply
 Of banquet for the eager bird:
 Unless to village church transferr'd
 It lend its brilliant colours gay
 To grace the Saviour's natal day.

380

More rare the scarlet-berried YEW
 Expands his arms of darker hue:
 Fam'd that of old 'twas his to show
 Meet armoury for the length of bow,
 Which none but English arms could bend;
 And thence the cloth-yard arrow send,
 Urg'd by the incumbent body's weight,
 Through harness'd horseman's mail or plate:—
 Fam'd that 'twas his, his shade to spread
 O'er the lone mansions, which the dead
 Deep in their narrow beds inhume;
 And still, with melancholy gloom
 Appropriate deem'd, his boughs he waves
 Above the peasants' osier'd graves.

390

And brethren FIRS their heads erect
With shades of brighter foliage deck'd,
Still lessening upward as they rise ;
In shape alike, unlike in size :—
Their stems with leafy scales o'erlaid ;—
Or with smooth silvery bark array'd, 400
Whose leaves of bright resplendent green
Upturn'd reveal a silvery sheen,
Prolifick of tenacious juice ;—
Or such as welling forth produce
A rival, from the bleeding wound,
For Gilead's balsam ; and around
From silvery leaves sweet fragrance breathe,
Streak'd with cerulean lines beneath,
As on the air they float. But most,
Of SCOTIA's hills the hardy boast 410
Alone above the pastur'd grass
Waves slow his boughs' unwieldly mass ;
Or clothes, with shade collective crown'd,
Yon DANISH fort's time-honour'd mound ;
Or, scatter'd o'er the steep hill-side,
Dismantled of its vernal pride,
Unveils his broad cerulean form,
Regardless of the wintry storm.
That form tho' slender grace induc,
Nor bright be that cerulean hue, 420
He boasts, by favouring contrast shown,
A dignity beyond his own :
A lowly coin in wealth despis'd,
In penury caress'd and priz'd !

And well it fares with them, who now
 In park, or lawn, or upland brow,
 Can boast the ever-verdant PINE:—
 Him round whose branch, what time decline
 The autumnal days, uprising stand
 His wintry leaves, a bristling band, 430
 Known by the noble WEYMOUTH'S name;
 By whose sagacious care he came
 From climes Columbian, and unfurl'd
 His foliage in our older world:—
 PINASTER'S graceful sweep, whose cones
 Clustering in brown and turgid zones
 His stem of sober grey invest:—
 STONE-PINE, whose seeds, the Italian's feast,
 Plung'd in their scal'd and ponderous bed
 Threaten the unwary traveller's head*:— 440
 And dear to them, on distant climes,
 Who love, and on the ancient times,
 But chiefly on the lot to dwell
 Of thee, once favour'd ISRAEL,
 The CEDAR'S stately growth! Though rare
 With us of grandeur to compare
 With such as wont of old to crown
 The rocks of snowy LEBANON,
 And still on LEBANON display
 Their wrecks majestick in decay: 450
 And still in heaven-instructed strain
 Of HEBREW BARD† their place maintain,

* See Martial, Ep. xiii. 25.

Poma sumus Cybeles: procul hinc discede, viator,
 Ne cadat in miscrum nostra ruina caput.

† Ezek. xxxi. 3-5.

"With branches manifold and spread
 Afar and wide ; with spiral head
 Hid in the boughs' collected crowd ;
 With stature high and shadowing shroud :"—
 Yet charms he, if perchance your eye
 His venerable form descry,
 Such as in ENFIELD's royal chase
 He holds his proud and lonely place, 460
 The plant of learned UVEDALE's skill,
 Seedling from Syrian rocks ; and still
 There stands despite the rending wind,
 The monarch of his stately kind :
 Or such as, with collective grace,
 A tribe of that unrivall'd race
 O'er WARWICK's princely reign extend,
 And with a pomp their branches bend,
 Befits the battlemented wall,
 The vaulted porch, baronial hall, 470
 The castle's antique armoury,
 JULIUS' high tow'r, and keep of GUY :—
 Yes, charms he ; though less tall he grows,
 And less his spreading branches throws,
 Still does the CEDAR charm the sight ;
 But haply more his charms delight
 (By those nice links of thought, that bind
 Dissociate scenes,) the pensive mind ;
 And in reflection's day-dreams lost
 Bears her afar to SYRIA's coast. 480
 Thence rise the records to her eye,
 And songs of holy imagery ;
 From Egypt's land how Israel's vine,
 Planted in fertile PALESTINE,

Far o'er the hills its shadow threw,
 And like the GOODLY CEDAR grew*:
 How from yon mountain top, indued
 With covering of the CEDAR wood†,
 Rose on mount Sion's northern side,
 Joy of the earth, her temple's pride: 490
 How they who loved that holy place,
 Bath'd by the dews of heavenly grace,
 Presented in their lives portray'd
 The goodly CEDAR's height and shade‡!

Dead is the vine of Israel now:
 Each branch and cedar-seeming bough
 The wild beast of the field hath torn,
 Away the forest boar hath borne!
 Fall'n is the temple's lofty height;
 Each heavenly sign, each holy rite, 500
 The cedar-fabrick all o'erthrown,
 Beam rent from beam, and stone from stone!
 But God hath rear'd another vine
 More fair than that of Palestine,
 Whose branching arms and towering head
 With more majestick grandeur spread.
 And God hath built another shrine
 In beauty, Sion, passing thine,
 Materials richer, and which own
 A more enduring corner-stone. 510
 And there a new and cherish'd race
 Have found a more perennial place,
 Offsprings and nurslings of his care;
 Thrive in its courts, and flourish there,

* Psalm lxxx. 10. † 2 Kings vi. ‡ Psalm xcii. 12.

And pass the goodly CEDAR's form,
By age unworn, unblench'd by storm!

Thus while from scenes of sense away
My thoughts to scenes ideal stray,
Each hour, each minute, as I muse,
More wide DESTRUCTION's work diffuse. 520

Few were the leaves that held this morn
Frail tenure on their trees forlorn:
Such tenure, lo! they're quitting fast,
Before NOVEMBER's early blast, .
Which, as they fall, or from the ground
Caught up, in spiry volumes round
Whirls them in mingled masses high:
Or, like the vernal BUTTERFLY,
In sportive mazes, here and there,
They mount and flutter thro' the air; 530
So deem'd, in artless childhood's sight,
Their colours gay and motions light.

Yes, DEAREST CHILD! the thought was thine,
As thou with pleasure infantine,
And nature's simple taste, didst note
The wing-like foliage round thee float.
Thy playful mind the likeness caught:
But yet, unus'd to graver thought,
That mind was not awake to see
The wide and deep diversity 540
Between the insect and the leaf;
Wide as the step from joy to grief,
Wide as the interval appears
From childhood to declining years:

That, sporting light on painted plume,
This, speeding to the silent tomb!—
 O be it thine, sweet child, to vie
 In rapture with the butterfly,
 And frolick, void of guile as she,
 With bosom full of vernal glee;
 When chill NOVEMBER's death-like blast
 Has o'er this faded body past,
 And with the leaves, that fall around,
 Consign'd it to its kindred ground!

550

Who knows not, in the manners mild
 And humble of a "little child,"
 How for our rash presumptuous kind
 Did WISDOM's self a lesson find*?
 And he who sets his mind to scan,
 Unhackney'd in the ways of man
 A "little child's" simplicity,
 From malice, guile, and envy free,
 With what its parents will, content,
 Yet uncorrupt and innocent;
 Who notes its thoughts, and words, and ways,
 Its occupations, studies, plays:
 May thence perchance instruction draw
 Ministrant to the heavenly law,
 And take from childhood's book a page
 Of learning for maturer age.

- 560

570

Small things are precious, and impart
 Improvement to the willing heart!
 So deems the meditative Muse;
 And thus in lighter strain pursues,

* Matt. xviii. 1, 2.

But not in light, unthrifty mood
* That "little child's" similitude.

Discolour'd by wet and dismantled by frost,
Well nigh had the garden its garniture lost ;
And the blasts of November unsparingly strew'd
The fast falling leaves of the copse and the wood. 580

The LEAVES, as they fell or lay loose on the ground,
Were caught by the whirlwind, and twisted around ;
Around, up and downward, now here and now there,
They skimm'd o'er the earth, and they swam on the
air.

My LIZZIE remark'd them as round her they flew,
So fantastick in figure, so shining in hue,
In motion so frolicksome, buoyant, and light,
And she liken'd their forms to the BUTTERFLY's flight,

In that object of pleasure she saw not the sign
Of the winter's approaches, the autumn's decline, 590
The faded leaf seem'd like the butterfly's wing,
And the last trace of autumn the symptom of spring,

Enjoy, my sweet child, the resemblance enjoy ;
I would not the vision of pleasure destroy :
I would not impress thee with nature's decay,
Nor warn that her beauty is passing away.

Enough, when the clouds shall have vented their load,
And flooded the meads, and obstructed the road ;

Enough for thee then to discover with grief
The bereavement that waits on the FALL of the
LEAF. 600

Now abroad, while permitted, go, cheerfully rove
Through the field and the garden, the copse and the
grove ;
And sure, when the weather forbids thee to roam,
Employment and pleasure will meet thee at home.

Thine's the age of enjoyment! And happy are they,
Who through nature with child-like simplicity stray ;
Who despite of the time, in the season's despite,
Make occasions of pleasure each object of sight :

Who with thoughts of to-morrow's increasing decay
Disturb not the innocent joys of to-day ; 610
From the fall of a LEAF feel a pleasantness spring,
And deem it as fair as the BUTTERFLY'S wing !

Hard by the BROOK, that glides beneath,
Where hangs the TRAVELLER'S JOY a wreath
Of feathery seeds globose, and FERN
Waves drooping o'er the bosky bourn,
In many a brown and tawny heap
The eddying winds the foliage sweep.
A slender twig, at random tost,
Has here and there the streamlet crost. 620
Thither the leaves in clusters throng,
And as the waters creep along,

Still gathering form a gulphy bay,
 And check the rippling runnel's way.
 Now, where the dam, less thickly placed,
 An outlet leaves, with fretful haste
 The brook, its current turn'd askew,
 Bubbling and foaming passes through.
 And now, where strides the unyielding ridge
 From bank to bank, an archless bridge, 630
 With gather'd force the barrier o'er
 Right down the angry waters pour :
 Till, in a basin broad below,
 Uncheck'd they spread, unbroken flow,
 And thro' their bed of wavy grass
 In undisturbed stillness pass.

So fares it with the STREAM of LIFE !
 How small a cause will wake to strife
 That little rill ! At once efface
 Its due tranquillity ; displace 640
 The current from its stated bounds ;
 And cause it o'er opposing mounds
 To swell impatient !—Happy they,
 Who from resistance steal away ;
 Hold calmly on their course assign'd,
 And in the track of duty find,
 Secure from every thwarting ill,
 A peaceful passage calm and still !

What prodigality of SOUND
 Is heard above, beneath, around ! 650
 The WIND the laurel branches heaves,
 And rustles in the quivering leaves ;

While big round drops, that now descend
From bough to bough, their pattering blend.
From bordering trees dismantled rise
Sobs, as of woe, and louder sighs.
But where the blasts imprison'd sweep
Thro' yon tall mountain's woodclad steep,
Resounds a long continuous roar,
Like billows on the salt sea shore ; 660
Or countless voices, loud and rude,
Of some ungovern'd multitude.

Now high, now low, it sinks and swells,
As more or less the blast impels
The booming boughs : but no delay,
No minute's stop, no moment's stay,
Is felt. Nor rest he grants, nor pause,
The Spirit of the storm ; nor draws
An instant's breath, that may allow
The ear to say, "There's stillness now!" 670

There is a sense of AWE PROFOUND
Dwells in that long continuous sound !
Not startling, like the thunder-peal,
Which makes the staggering spirit reel :
But a deep feeling undefin'd,
Which seizes on the yielding mind ;
Holds her o'erpower'd, but not distress ;
Soothes her, but lulls her not to rest ;
And o'er her casts a potent spell,
Which she nor can, nor would, dispel. 680
A feeling, to the pensive dear,
Of pleasure not unmix'd with fear !

'Tis STILLNESS NOW ! A sudden stay
Has check'd the wild wind on its way,

As, screaming on its mother's breast,
 At once the infant sinks to rest.
 And now throughout the wood, that late
 Wav'd bending to the tempest's weight,
 Nor could its depths an echo form,
 Save to the wailing of the storm ; 690
 Nor bends a twig, nor breathes a breath :
 'Tis silence, like the calm of death.
 'Twould seem that winter had foregone,
 By wrong usurp'd, his stormy throne,
 And giv'n the rightful sway again
 To mild October's placid reign.
 Or rather HE, whose boundless force
 Directs each month's, each season's course,
 Who form'd creation's works of old,
 And, what he form'd, hath still controll'd, 700
 Ev'n He hath said, at whose high will
 The wind or swells or falls, "Be still!"

What SOUND is that, which loud and shrill
 Breaks pleasantly the silence still?—
 And art thou there, whom many a day
 I've sought to hear thy roundelay,
 BIRD of the sleek and spotless BLACK?
 Yes: 'twas thy note: thou'rt welcome back,
 Attended by thy dusky mate.
 What, thou hast lov'd thro' woods of late 710
 Wild nature's denizen to roam ;
 And now thou seek'st a safer home,
 A readier meal, a thicker skreen
 'Mid boughs of sheltering evergreen!

Well, be it so! Thou'rt welcome here;
 For well I love thy whistle clear,
 Tho' frequent less, less rich the note,
 Than that which swells thy vernal throat.
 Here lurk in peace, prepar'd to greet
 Among the first the primrose sweet,
 And make the wood and garden ring
 With the full harmony of spring!

720

No such harmonious concert now
 From garden bush, or woodland bough;
 But faint, and far between, is heard
 The song of solitary bird.

Such gurgling from thy yellow bill
 At intervals the deep-ton'd trill,
 As, starting quick from laurel bush,
 Thy wings the garden's surface brush.

730

And such, in brown and yellow drest,
 Thy BROTHER'S of the SPOTTED BEE-AST.
 What tho', throughout the year's decline,
 He now delight not line on line,
 From morn to noon, from noon to eve,
 His strain's unbroken web to weave,
 As all the springtide hours along;
 Yet oft with sweetly warbled song
 Even now he wakes the morning dim,
 Even now he chaunts his evening hymn,
 And oft e'en now with grateful lays
 Salutes the mild meridian rays.

740

And such, with voice so sweet and small,
 From oaken twig the madrigal,
 Of him the bird of GOLDEN CREST,
 And size diminutive, the least

Of Britain's warblers. To the ear
 More frequent thro' the waning year
 Comes the sweet note from flocks, that seek
 From HYPERBOREAN mountains bleak 750
 Our milder glens. But, as they wind,
 Round oak or elm's deep-furrow'd rind,
 Or to the spreading fir-tree wing
 Alert their fluttering flight, and cling
 Beneath the boughs, the foliage thread,
 And creeping to the topmost head
 From branch to branch all noiseless steal,
 The trees the tiny form conceal,
 The back with ashy green bedight,
 The wings with sable barr'd and white, 760
 The breast's pale yellow mixt with brown,
 And fring'd with black the orange crown.

But chiefly he is heard, whose praise
 Still lives in England's cottage lays,
 He, who those hapless "children" strew'd
 With leaves amid the lonely "wood!"
 And still is ROBIN far and near
 To England's cottage children dear:
 For motions brisk, and manners free,
 And merry pipe of livelong glee, 770
 As blithe he perches overhead,
 Or pecks the fall'n leaves' wither'd bed,
 Or hops the saunterer's steps before,
 Or seeks the hospitable door,
 By all afield, at home preferr'd,
 The friend of man, the household bird!

Nor few the lively sounds, that still,
 Mix'd with the tinkling of the rill,
 The air's LESS TUNEFUL TENANTS make,
 From hill or meadow, grove or brake: 780
 Tho' little priz'd by vulgar ear,
 To nature's watchful votary dear.

Where in large flocks thro' forest bare
 They swarm, no longer pair by pair
 Disperst, as when their nestling brood
 They rear amid the deep green wood;
 On lofty ash the solemn note
 Pour'd from the CUSHAT'S varied throat,
 Which spots of silvery white infold,
 And wavy gleams of verdant gold. 790
 The JAY'S harsh scream: the alarum cry
 Loud echoing of the clamorous PIE:
 Thrice knoll'd from his coeval oak
 The RAVEN'S deep funereal croak:
 And cawing ROOKS' repeated sound,
 Aloft, and wheeling round and round,
 Where the brown stubble's new turn'd row:
 The worm and buried grub disclose.
 DESTROY THEM NOT! For tho' with these
 Perchance some scatter'd grains they seise, 800
 They'll more than pay the corn they take:
 Then spare them for your harvest's sake!
 Or, if for nature's charms you care,
 O, for their strange wild music spare!

Such more remote. At hand I greet
 The nimble WAGTAIL'S brisk "te-whcet:"

OR HEDGEROW CHANTER'S chirrup sharp,
 Like twanging string of lute or harp:
 OR CHAFFINCH'S unchanging "twink"
 From beechen bough: or "Chink, chink, chink," 810
 The quick note of the russet WREN.
 Familiar to the haunts of men,
 He quits in hollow'd wall his bow'r,
 And thro' the winter's gloomy hour
 Sings cheerily: nor yet hath lost
 His blitheness, chill'd by pinching frost;
 Nor yet is forc'd for warmth to cleave
 To cavern'd nook, or strawbuilt cave.
 Sing, little bird! Sing on, design'd
 A lesson for our anxious kind; 820
 That we, like thee, with heart's content
 Enjoy the blessings, God hath sent;
 His bounty trust, perform his will,
 Nor antedate uncertain ill!

Loud chatters from his ivied hold
 The BLACK-CAPP'D OXEYE, fierce and bold.
 And see alarm'd before me flit
 Of smaller size his BROTHER TIT,
 Vest yellowish green, and BONNET BLUE.
 Now up, now down, and through and through, 830
 O'er trunk and branch, with prying beak
 He climbs, and restless eye, to seek,
 Close lodg'd within the crevic'd wood,
 Or moss-clad bark, his insect food.
 His haunt the larva's known resort:
 Nor less the homestead's stable court
 Attracts him: thence with pilfer'd grain
 He hies him to his bush again,

And forth the precious morsel draws
With sounding bill and grasping claws. 840

But hark! what HURLING NOISE is there,
What sound of rushing thro' the air?
Close lurking in the laurel boughs
My steps a host of SPARROWS rouse.
Up from their couch at once they spring,
And brush, brush, brush, with rustling wing
Wheel off to yonder leafless trees:
There sit they, thick as clustering bees;
Till, past the terror, back they crowd,
And, with tumultuous clamour loud, 850
From twig to twig aspiring hop,
And struggle for the loftiest top.
What, *you*, ye little birds of air,
Do *you* for rank and station care?
What boots it, safe from nightly foe,
Which roost above, and *which* below?
Forbear the ambitious strife for place,
And leave it to our wiser race!

Such lingering sounds remain to cheer
The dulness of the parting year. 860
Nor does its face as yet assume
Confirm'd its character of GLOOM.
Tho' oft the shrouded welkin lowers
With murky clouds and dripping showers;
Yet wants there not a CHEERFUL BEAM,
Now and again to shed a gleam
Of radiant gladness; and the shroud
Of dripping show'rs, and murky cloud,

Light with a sadly pleasing grace ;

A smile upon affliction's face !

870

I see him now, the GOLDEN SUN !

As from beneath that wimple dun,

Wherein he veil'd his streaming crest,

While journeying to his goal of rest,

Forth looks he with declining light,

Or ere he bids the world good night.

And now he's gone ! No, yet ONCE MORE

His rays REVIVING LUSTRE pour !

'Twas but a passing cloud, that reft

Few moments' light, and now hath left

880

His brighten'd beams again to shine

Above the forest's western line.

Full sure I deem'd him buried quite,

Absorb'd in darkness and in night.

And so to them, whom deep distress

O'erhangs, their sun of happiness,

Before its earthly bound he met,

Seems in c'erwhelming clouds to set.

Cheer up, sad heart ! For who can say,

But that the clouds, which throng thy way.

890

And menace thee with livelong gloom,

The darken'd sun may yet illume ;

Beam on thy evening path awhile,

And bless thee with a farewell smile !

How much of PLACE a trifling CHANGE

Affects the eyes' still varying range !

But now, as yonder spot I trod,

Near verging on the upland wood,

The sun, behind the mount embay'd,
 Was hidden, and I walk'd in shade. 900
 Few are the steps that intervene,
 'Tis but the garden's breadth between,
 Above the wood's illumin'd head,
 Above the hill, his beams are shed ;
 Now on my path with radiance bright
 They glitter, and I walk in light.

And so perchance, when on the mind,
 In scenes to gloominess inclin'd,
 Departing pleasures, as they go,
 A shadow prematurely throw ; 910
 Most wisely we the thoughts employ
 In places, more akin to joy,
 Joy to no taint of vice allied,
 And ever found on virtue's side,
 And seek to catch, while yet we may,
 The brightness of the sinking ray !

FULL BRIEF at best ! For as the sun,
 While thus I muse, his goal has won,
 And here and there, each darkening side
 Alike the gathering shadows hide ; 920
 So with the night's o'erhanging fall,
 That waits and must descend on all,
 But a FEW MOMENTS' speedy pace,
 A GARDEN WALK'S contracted space,
 A POINT 'gainst endless being weigh'd,
 Divides the first and latest shade !

O, come it first, or come it last,
 The shadow o'er my passage cast,
 Grant it may find me on my guard,
 And at thy will, O God, prepar'd, 930

To welcome the approaching gloom,
The deep dark stillness of the tomb!
'Tis but a transitory night:
The sun shall rise, and all be light!

Sweet thought, and of sweet solace full,
And apt the swelling grief to lull
Of those, beside a parting friend
Constrain'd in bitterness to bend;
The form, so cherish'd once and dear,
To follow on its funeral bier;
And see the grave above it close,
The last "long home" of man's repose.

940

It has been said, and I believe,
Though tears of natural sorrow start,
'Tis mix'd with pleasure when we grieve
For those the dearest to the heart,
From whom long-lov'd at length we part;
As by a Christian's feelings led
We lay them in their peaceful bed.

Yet speak I not of those who go
The allotted pilgrimage on earth,
With earth-born passions grovelling low,
Enslav'd to honour, avarice, mirth,
Unconscious of a nobler birth:
But such as tread with loftier scope
The Christian's path with Christian hope.

950

We grieve to think, that they again
Shall ne'er in this world's pleasure share:
But sweet the thought, that this world's pain
No more is their's; that this world's care 960
It is no more their lot to bear.
And surely in this scene below
The joy is balanc'd by the woe!

We grieve to see the lifeless form,
The livid cheek, the sunken eye:
But sweet to think, corruption's worm
The living spirit can defy,
And claim its kindred with the sky.
Lo! where the earthen vessel lies!
Aloft the unbodied tenant flies. 970

We grieve to think, our eyes no more
That form, those features lov'd, shall trace:
But sweet it is from memory's store
To call each fondly-cherish'd grace,
And fold them in the heart's embrace.
No bliss 'mid worldly crowds is bred,
Like musing on the sainted dead!

We grieve to see expir'd the race
They ran, intent on works of love:
But sweet to think, no mixture base, 980
Which with their better nature strove,
Shall mar their virtuous deeds above.
Sin o'er their soul has lost his hold,
And left them with their earthly mould!

We grieve to know, that we must roam
 Apart from them each wonted spot:
But sweet to think, that they a home
 Have gain'd, a fair and goodly lot,
 Enduring, and that changeth not.
And who that home of freedom there
Will with this prison-house compare? 990

'Tis grief to feel, that we behind
 Sever'd from those we love remain:
'Tis joy to hope, that we shall find,
 Exempt from sorrow, fear, and pain,
 With them our dwelling-place again.
'Tis but like them to sink to rest,
With them to waken and be blest!

O THOU, who form'st thy creature's mind
 With thoughts that chasten and that cheer, 1000
Grant me to fill my space assign'd
 For sojourning a stranger here
 With holy hope and filial fear:
Fear to be banish'd far from Thee,
And hope thy face unveil'd to see!

There before Thee, the GREAT; the GOOD,
 By angel myriads compass'd round,
"Made perfect" by the SAVIOUR's blood,
 With virtue cloth'd, with honour crown'd,
 "The spirits of the just" are found: 1010
There tears no more of sorrow start,
Pain flies the unmolested heart,
And life in bliss unites whom death no more shall part.

But see from marsh and lake and stream
 Far off the expansive VAPOUR steam!
 Now step by step behold it creep
 O'er mead and lawn! and soon 'twill steep
 Forest and copse in moisture dim,
 Each trickling stem, each dripping limb;
 And shroud, what yet remains of day, 1020
 In curtain thick of bluish gray.

No more! 'Tis well I now conclude
 The garden walk, the musing mood,
 And with the world's engagements cope.
 Yet not presumptuous is the hope,
 Nor vain, from such a source may flow
 Good which no worldly toys bestow:—
 That he, who thus sequester'd sees,
 With nice regard the wint'ry trees
 Their full-grown honours round them cast; 1030
 And listens to the sounding blast;
 And pōres upon the babbling brook;
 And scans with curious ear and look,
 Whate'er, his pathway still surrounds
 Of drooping nature's sights and sounds;
 May aid NOVEMBER's gloomy day
 To pass with livelier pace away,
 Void of offence, of censure void,
 In harmless, blameless peace enjoy'd:
 But chief his vacant mind may use 1040
 On thoughts of import high to muse;
 And draw from dead and senseless things,
 From every scene, that nature brings
 To charm him from her boundless store,
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DECEMBER.

To close the waning months' career,
To bid farewell the parting year,
Yet ONE STAGE more! Through gloomy skies,
And miry ways, the journey lies;
Dimin'd are the landscape's features fair,
And mute the musick of the air.
Yet oft you see a beaming smile
DECEMBER of his gloom beguile: "
And still to them, who pierce below
The surface, and desire to know 10
From objects, that the sense employ,
A more than vulgar transient joy;
'Tis no unpleasing task to trace
The sadder traits of nature's face,
And in her frowns and tears to find
Food for the meditative mind.

CLEAR was the DAWN, and fair to-day
The brightness of the morning ray.
And when the sun, all rosy red,
Lit yon south-eastern mountain's head, 20
Upon a prospect fair he shone,
Fair as he oft has shin'd upon.
The earth, outspread his beams before,
Was mantled with a vesture frorc.

And brightened by his orient beam,
 Earth with that vesture frore might seem
 With tissued robe of silver dight,
 And sown with sparkling gems of light.
 While heav'n, which first uncurtain'd spread
 Around those beams of rosy red, 30
 Disparted then in fillets sheen
 Of orange, pink, and golden green;
 The heaven at length with cloudless blue,
 Pure as the summer's midday hue,
 And, casting back that blue again,
 Beneath the interminable main,
 Join'd in the vision of delight,
 And laughed to see that glorious sight.*"

The SHOW is PAST. For like a show,
 Emblem of all this world below 40
 Can furnish, beauteous, bright, and gay,
 Of short duration, swift decay,
 Full oft is EARLY WINTER'S FROST!
 A pageant vain, a transient boast,
 It glitters in the morning ray;
 As with a breath, it melts away:
 And, oft before that glorious sun
 Has his meridian summit won,
 O'ershadowing mists obscure his face;
 Till that resplendent morn give place 50
 To a dim noontide's sight deform,
 An eve of gloom, a night of storm.

Yes, STORMY is the NIGHT and drear!
 Its rage you see not, but you hear

* Chaucer; *C. T.*, 1496.

Fast and more fast the ceaseless rain,
Which clatters on the rattling pane
With side-long drift; with bubbling plash
Bursts sputtering from the creaking sash;
Sweeps round the walls, and beats aloof
Right downward on the slated roof: 60
Mixt with the gusty blast, that howls
And bellows thro' the chimney cowl,
Thro' passages, and quivering doors;
And nook and crevic'd chink explores
With whistle shrill, and long-drawn sigh,
And rush of pinions hurtling by!
Now like the crash of jangling bells,
It peals amain; and now it yells
Heart-stirring sounds: while fancy dreams
She hears commingled shouts and screams, 70
The noise of conflict in the air,
And now the wailings of despair,
And now disaster's bitter cry:
And listens, while, as in reply,
Sound from the wood responsive tones,
Ear-piercing shouts, and sullen moans!
'Tis pleasant then the mind to keep
Suspended, from the midnight sleep:
To gratulate our place of rest,
From ill secured, with comfort blest; 80
And turn a kindly thought on those,
Whom less indulgent lots expose,
On dismal waste, or ocean tide,
The pelting of the storm to bide.
And well it is the mind to raise
To Him, whose will the tempest sways;

To pray of Him, his shield to spread
 O'er the defenceless, houseless head ;
 For blessings, that our home surround,
 To breathe the silent thanks profound ; 90
 Then calmly, in his safeguard blest,
 To "lay us down and take our rest*!"

Yet oft may tenderer feelings rise
 Of sweet DOMESTICK CHARITIES,
 And prompt a warmer pray'r, if one,
 A KINSMAN, or perchance a SON,
 By kindness as by blood allied,
 Be tossing o'er the waters wide !

Such pray'r for thee, my GALLANT BOY,
 Whose ways my daily thoughts employ, 100
 But most my visions of the night,
 When darkness broods and storms affright ;
 Such pray'r I tender then for thee !

That the GREAT RULER of the sea
 O'er the tempestuous ocean-tide
 May be thy Keeper and thy Guide,
 Preserve and give thee good success !
 Mix'd with parental thankfulness,
 That still his arm hath o'er thee held
 In northern floods his guardian shield, 110
 Nor less from danger's Proteus' forms
 Which haunt that southern "cape of storms,"

AUSTRALIAN, MAGELLANICK seas,
 COLUMBIAN isles and CYCLADES :—
 Chief in that *peril*, when the deep
 Receiv'd thee from thy tow'r-like ship

Down plunging, resolute to save
 Death's victim from the wintry wave.
 And death had triumph'd, but that He,
 Who bade thee to the rescue flee, 120
 The flame he lighted in thy breast
 With answering skill and vigour blest,
 And from the tyrant's closing maw
 Empower'd the sinking prey to draw!
 A *peril*, whence, in days of old,
 ROME, had she own'd thee, had inroll'd
 Thy name with honour for the deed,
 And crown'd thee with befitting meed :
 For ROME her generous children knew
 To recompense with honour due, 130
 Him crowning with her noblest wreath,
 Who sav'd a citizen from death !

But truce to thoughts like these ! To God
 "Who sits above the water-flood *,"
 Be mine to lift the voice of praise !
 Be mine the voice of pray'r to raise !
 Now when the wind in fury raves,
 And loud respond the midnight waves,
 Where'er at duty's call, remote
 O'er the broad sea 'tis thine to float, 140
 Be mine the humble confidence,
 Which in the hour of danger, whence
 Alone come help and safety, knows,
 The faithful spirit's calm repose† !

* Psalm xxix. 9.

† The author desires to take this occasion of expressing to the ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY a thankful acknowledgment for their approbation of the act noticed above, testified by their

'Tis MORNING'S hour! But with the dawn
 Scarce from the face of things withdrawn
 Is night's black curtain. DARKNESS lowers
 O'er the dim earth in ceaseless showers;
 And hangs o'er heav'n a deathlike shroud,
 One dense, unchang'd, unopening cloud. 150
 Not, as in April's changeful day,
 At intervals a sunny ray
 Breaks cheerful thro' the floating rack:
 But morn to noon an inky black
 Frowns mournful on the wearied sight,
 From noon to eve, from eve to night.

Nor field nor garden now invites
 The rambling step to new delights.
 NATURE to man, and bird, and beast,
 Proclaims a dull unwonted REST. 160
 Aside the inactive plough is laid:
 The adhesive mould the clotted spade
 Defies. Beneath the sheltering hedge,
 Beneath the stack's o'erhanging ledge,

medal, "Ob civem servatum." It was the opinion of persons conversant with the naval service, that the act would have led to the professional advancement of the young man, then a year past midshipman: especially as his gallant, humane, and meritorious conduct was duly reported and recommended by the Admiral of the station, and the Captain of the ship, to the proper authorities, by whom it was *in words* acknowledged. After almost three years, however, he is still in the same situation: having now had the honour of serving his Majesty, with a brief interruption, for near ten years, during which he has acquired a high character from every commanding officer under whom he has served.

The HERDS and FLOCKS, each cautious form
Turn'd backward to the driving storm,
Crowd fearfully. Their GUARDIANS nigh
In folding cloak close mantled lie:
And nigh the DOGS, still wont to share
The master's comforts as his care,
Beneath the well-known refuge creep,
Lull'd by the storm to transient sleep.

170

The BIRDS, free nature's tenants, house,
As best they may, within the boughs:
While those, for man's convenience bred,
Couch cowering in their household shed.

Not now afar the flocking DOVE
Wheels his swift flight, tho' apt' to rove,
And seek whate'er the cultur'd field
Or distant thrashing floor may yield.
Him the harsh time forbids to ply
The rapid wing, and thro' the sky
With smooth unerring motion float,
Close tenant of the crowded oote.

180

Tho' with his shrill and cheerful horn
He early wak'd the slumbering morn,
Not now the scarlet-crested COCK
Leads proudly forth the obedient FLOCK;
Their nightly roost not yet forsook,
Or thronging in some covert nook.

190

Not now the TURKEY gives to view
His head and neck of red and blue;
And, as he stalks his dames around,
Sweeps with strong wing the grating ground.

Not now to pick the scatter'd seeds
 His young the dark PINTADO leads ;
 Whose spangles white unnumber'd lie,
 Like stars throughout the dark blue sky.

Not now the PEACOCK proud displays
 Abroad his many-mingled rays ; 200
 Of verdant gold his tufted crest,
 His purple neck, and purple breast,
 Which, slowly wav'd, their plumes indue
 At every change with colours new.
 Clos'd is his bright green length of train,
 Which FLORA'S richest tints in vain
 May strive to match : instinct with eyes,
 Of gemlike lights, and rainbow dies.
 See on the limb of elm-tree tall,
 The barn's steep thatch, or paddock wall, 210
 He now maintains his airy hold,
 Nor deigns his dripping tail unfold.
 But when the sun's reviving beams
 Shall tempt him forth, with rival gleams
 Again his gorgeous disk he'll spread ;
 And o'er his coronetted head
 Incline the bending plumes, and move
 Majestick 'mid the bright alcove.

Yet are there some, who pleas'd employ
 The time with a more sprightly joy, 220
 Birds of the WEBB'D and PALMATE FEET !
 They with hoarse cries of welcome greet,
 Rejoicing in their wet domain,
 The floods of still descending rain :
 High o'er their backs with fluttering wing,
 And splashing bill, the moisture fling ;

Or round and round disporting sail ;
Or downward, with inverted tail,
Plunge deep, the head and neck to lave,
And revel in the dimpled wave. 230

To each his pleasures, as assign'd
By HIM, who each created kind
Gave parts adapted to his race,
And each his own appropriate place :—
The pinion strong and light and fleet,
Or sinewy legs, or oarlike feet,
The heaven's expanded face to skim,
To walk the earth, the flood to swim.—
To all extends his bounty's plan,
To bird and beast, but most to man ! • 240

Ah ! DREAR is now the SEASON'S pow'r,
• And dull the lazy-footed hour,
To them whose minds the sway confess
Of apathetick listlessness ;
Nor their's the body's boon employ,
Nor thcir's the mind's sublimer joy.

O, NOW BE MINE, tho' pent at home,
In thought o'er distant climes to roam ;
Or summon round my lonely hearth
The wise and learned of the earth ; 250
Still better pleas'd, such converse there,
Combin'd with those I love, to share !
Mine through the present minute's space,
The lore of bygone times to trace,
In never-dying records shown ;
And make the ages past my own !

Be mine, shut out from rural views,
 To meditate the rural Muse ;
 Or, by the pen's or pencil's aid,
 Survey before my sight portray'd 260
 By mimic art kind nature's store ;
 Her universal works explore ;
 And thence to NATURE'S AUTHOR look,
 Or mark Him in his written book !
 Great in his *works*, but still more great
 Is He, and in his *word*, complete :
 Those his great pow'r and godhead prove ;
 This loud proclaims that "God is love !"

To him, who thus the gloom can cheer,
 No season's dull, no weather drear. 270

But still abroad their sway maintain
 The beating wind, the pouring rain.
 And see, 'tis mark'd, that heathy hill,
 With many a strange unwonted RILL ;
 A brawler, full of rage and sound,
 Scattering its turbid froth around ;
 Made no perennial course to hold,
 And feed the vegetative mould ;
 But such as troublous times produce,
 For wild o'erflowing floods a sluice, 280
 Which dangerous less, less straitly pent,
 Here find a salutary vent :
 In days serene and calm unknown,
 'Tis here to-day, to-morrow gone !

Now too, the GARDEN'S little pride,
 Went with clear stream and calm to glide,

And bathe the trees' o'er-arching roots,
 And paint the flowers, mature the fruits;
 The **BROOK**, that babbling crept along,
 Scarce heard amid the blackbird's song, 290
 By night's, by day's, swift torrents swell'd,
 With still augmenting force propell'd,
 Down the slope fall impetuous pours
 His restless waves, and foams, and roars.
 Whate'er of late obstruction kept
 His course aback, before it swept,
 Or leafy heap, or transverse bough,
 Is gone; as forth it passes now
 In one diffuse unbroken stream,
 Which swelling meets the margin's brim. 300
 Till, to a little river grown,
 It scorns its wonted banks to own;
 And, more and more uplifted, spreads
 • Its waters o'er the subject **MEADS**:—
 Where evening saw the cattle graze,
 Disclosing to thè morrow's gaze,
 What may to stranger eyes appear,
 No meadow, but a fish-fraught **MERE**.
 While, o'er the necks of severing land,
 The flood the fish-fraught **MERES** expand; 310
 And gathering, unrestrained and free,
 Form thro' the vale a midland sea.

Thus, if the venturous Muse may dare
 Small things with greatest to compare,
 Above the "outstanding earth*" of old
 Were her collected waters roll'd,

* 2 Pet. iii. 5.

Join'd with the waters from the sky;
 And into FLOOD transformed "the dry."
 But what is great, and what is small,
 'To HIM who made and governs all? 320
 Alike to HIM, a cloke to spread
 Of water o'er the pastur'd mead;
 Or ope "heaven's floodgates*," and set free
 O'er the broad earth the boundless sea.
 He bids the clouds their stores expand,
 And metes the waters in his hand†!

Another night! In CALM REPOSE
 The heav'ns again their windows close,
 Again the peaceful brook has found
 On either hand its wonted bound: 330
 Where, a thin veil, the waters run,
 Quick glancing to the morning sun,
 And broider each uncover'd brim
 Bright sparkling with a silver rim.
 As sinks the slow subsiding surge,
 Again the unburden'd meads emerge; *
 But still the slime and oozy mud
 Mark with fresh stains the vanished flood: .
 Not pleasing to the idle eye;
 Yet there the thoughtful mind may spy, 340
 In store beneath the unsightly slime,
 The promise of the early prime,
 Bright fields with mantle fresh array'd,
 The painted flower, the verdant blade!

* Gen. vii. 11.

† Is. xl. 12.

How scant amid the wintry scene
 Is joy's bright tint, the cheerful green!
 The brush another Pow'r has caught,
 The GENIUS he of solemn thought;
 And all the LANDSCAPE'S face endues
 With varied shades of sober hues; 350
 O'er hill and valley, rise and fall,
 In mingled patches, DISMAL ALL.

All but the sprouting wheat, which shows
 Its tender blades in light green rows;
 Or where, by peasant's straw-thatched cot,
 Peeps forth a little garden plot;
 Or their fresh tints the turnips keep,
 Fit pasture for the nibbling sheep.

DARK is the hill with furrow'd brow,
 Fresh turn'd beneath the riving plough. 360
 Stripp'd of each straggling bramble bush,
 Of tussock'd grass, and spiky rush,
 All dark, and darkly spotted o'er
 With turf-stacks, is the peaty moor.

Dark is the mountain, forest-crown'd;
 The mantling copse; the hedgerow bound.
 All brown, no more with pendants graced
 Purple or pink, the heath-clad waste.
 Brown, of its waving honours shorn,
 The stubble of the golden corn. 370
 With scant and withered herbage brown
 The pastures of the upland down.
 With gleams of fading verdure mixt,
 Light shades of yellowish brown betwixt
 Invest the lawn, whose wavy sweep
 Is spotted with the fleecy sheep;

But darker still, and day by day
More dismal, shows its dun array.
Ev'n meads, of late so fresh and fair,
The winter's dusky livery wear; 380
Save where small patches intervene
Of lighter tint, or stripes of green
Mark where the limpid waters pass
In runnels through the living grass.
Like acts of kindness, which dispense
Refreshment to the languid sense,
And of their passage leave a trace
Imprinted on the cheerful face.

From day to day, from hour to hour,
How FITFUL is the season's power, 390
So prone to CHANGE, that scarce a day
Glides with consistent course away!

Now come BY TURNS, FROM MORN TO NIGHT,
Masses of GLOOM; and glares of LIGHT;
Thin streaked clouds, and skies between
Of watry pale, or azure sheen;
The tranquil air, the awaken'd gale,
Borne on its wings the rushing hail;
The sleety show'r, that, as it falls,
Stripes the bright space beyond; the squalls, 400
That come and go with hasty fit;
Dark piles, with partial sunshine lit;
Resplendent radiance, murky gleams,
Thick rolling fogs, and misty steams.

Now, when the stealthy dawn withdraws
Night's curtains; like transparent gauze,
Thin floating films suspended fly;
Red flushes tinge the MORNING SKY,
And show, their partial openings through,
Imperfect gleams of pallid blue. 410
The vapours melt and disappear:
And o'er the vaulted hemisphere,
Behold, no spot or speck is seen,
To violate the pure serene,
Where his slope course begins to hold
On heaven's low arch the orb of gold.
ANON, thick gloom usurps the sway
Triumphant o'er the vanquish'd day:
Clouds, piled on gathering clouds, infold,
Impervious depth, that orb of gold; 420
And waft him to his early bower,
• 'Mid piping blasts, and sleety shower.

And now, o'ercast the MORNING lowers,
With clouds, and blasts, and 'sleety showers;
Dark is the heav'n's cerulean arch,
Where the great sun begins his march
In twilight dun: his rising globe
All muffled in a funeral robe;
Or, from behind a misty veil
Of drizzling moisture, glimmering pale; 430
Or overlaid, as with a crust,
Deep, dark, and red, of bloody rust.
Ev'n like the moon, eclips'd and dim,
When o'er her face from rim to rim

The earth's obstructing form has laid
 A smokelike, dense, and dingy shade,
 While not a cloud nor vapour mars
 The brightness of the silver stars.
 ANON, attain'd the midmost zone,
 Rain, mist, and fog aside are thrown ; 440
 And, westering as his orb declines,
 Forth with unsullied light he shines.
 Thus the good man, whose path around
 A morn of gloom and tempest frown'd,
 Shines forth at last, erewhile distrest,
 And sinks in peace and joy to rest.

'Tis PLEASANT then, perhaps the more
 'Mid general waste, to see him pour
 On all around his glory's streams ;
 In a full flood of golden gleams 450
 As richly, as profusely dight,
 And o'er a vault as pure and bright,
 As when his furthest goal is won :
 Mid winter's skies a summer sun.
 Summer in aspect and in form,
 But void of genial radiance warm,
 TRUST NOT too far the FLATTERING RAY !
 He smiles, but trusted will betray,
 Who fondly on his smile relies,
 To chilling blasts and drenching skies ! 460

But if, slow-mounting day by day
 The FLUID SILVER hold its way,
 And still the convex column show
 Progressive still the weight below ;

Hope then at length the firmer air
Aloft th' incumbent clouds will bear.

Then when the sun departed yields
To paler lamps the ethereal fields,
'Tis pleasant still, but ah! beware
The perils of the evening air! 470
'Tis pleasant, with inquiring look,
To read in God's celestial book,
A passing page, in winter most
Illumin'd with the starry host;
And those resplendent globes to note;
Which thro' yon sea of ether float.
From those which WESTWARD hasten down,
The jewels in the BOREAL CROWN;
Thro' the bright LYRE, and overhead
The SWAN with plumed wings outspread, 480
Utain'd to her rock that MAIDEN fair,
And PERSEUS' hook, and GORGON'S hair,
Betwixt the silver-horned RAM,
And with the KIDS their brighter DAM:
To those, that, on the EASTERN verge
Of heav'n, from ocean's gulph emerge,
The SEV'N-FOLD SISTER LIGHTS, that deck
The BULL, and glisten on his neck,
But dare not all concenter'd vie
In brilliance with his sparkling eye; 490
And HIM, who rears his ample size,
To spread along the midnight skies
With gems his legs and shoulders graced,
His studded sword, and belted waist.
Nor want there those, that pour to north,
To south, their rival lustre forth:

Here the keen EAGLE's upright sign,
 And DOLPHIN's fourfold diamond, shine,
 With that POETICK HORSE; and there
 • The LADY of the imperial CHAIR,
 And CEPHEUS' kingly crown, and roll'd
 Around in many an ample fold
 The crested DRAGON's length of train;
 And sweeping o'er the subject main,
 And circling round the POLAR STAR
 Itself unmov'd, the NORTHERN CAR.

All these, and more, which art combines
 For memory's aid in fancied SIGNS:—

For, studious but to lead the eye
 Thro' the seen wonders of the sky, 510
 To mete of each, if scann'd aright,
 The distance, bulk, and use, and light,
 What moons round each revolve, what hue
 Of changeful tint may each imbue,
 I leave, by science' votaries done;
 Each twinkling star a central sun,
 A sun, to which could we compare
 Our own, 'twere but a twinkling star:—
 But these, as breaking on the sight,
 They one by one unveil their light, 520
 And thickly stud the evening robe,
 Which winter hangs around the globe;
 These STARRY SIGNS; that MILK-WHITE BAND,
 Wherewith the heavenly vault is spann'd,
 Of lights so small, they mock the sight,
 So bright, they shine with lustre white,
 So thick, in such profusion sown,
 They seem but one unbroken zone;

How do they fill the pensive sense
 With thoughts of HEAV'N'S MAGNIFICENCE! 530

Nor less those WANDERING FIRES, that rise
 More brilliant to our earthly eyes,
 As their unvaried course they go,
 And but with borrow'd lustre glow.
 If now the STAR OF EVE display
 Her silver globe, of heav'n's array
 Foremost and best: or MARS o'erspread
 His dusky orb with sanguine red:
 Or HE of AMPLER DISK, his boast
 His own attendant four-fold host: 540
 Or if with full-orb'd face the MOON,
 Now riding in her highest noon,
 Reign empress, and her path pursue
 In brightness 'mid the spotless blue.

O, may the SIGHT of yon bright vault
 My mind both *humble* and *exalt*!
 Prompt me, with thoughts chastis'd to know
 How feeble is my state, and low,
 Yet not by Him of naught esteem'd,
 Who made, preserv'd me, and redeem'd! 550
 Prompt me, aloft to Him to soar,
 And, more admir'd, to love him more;
 Who made these creatures, as they are,
 So great, so glorious, and so fair;
 Yet deigns his lower works to scan,
 And, most of all, to think of man!

It soothes the hearing, as the eye,
 The CALMNESS of this cloudless sky.
 And if, as taught by sages old,
 Not without song their course they hold, 560
 'Tis now might take the charmed ears
 That musick of the rolling spheres.

Breathes not a breath: nor sound is heard
 At hand, unless of lonely bird,
 Which gently warns us, we molest
 His sleep, then sinks again to rest.

But, hark! how plainly SOUNDS ALOOF
 The brisk tread of the horse's hoof;
 Or the belated peasant's shoon,
 Home hastening by the evening moon; 570
 Or wild curlew's alternate call
 From the salt strand; or distant fall
 Of water; or the sullen roar
 Of billows raking on the shore;
 Or baying dog from grange afar;
 Or rattle of the wheeled car;
 As echo from the harden'd ground
 Wafts thro' the elastick air the sound,
 Betokening to the curious ear
 The reign of frost approaching near. 580

The morning dawns, and gives to view
 By certain signs the token true.

Forth from his BOREAL mountain hold,
 The SPIRIT of CONGEALING COLD,
 Where wrapt in lonely state he dwells,
 'Mid frozen seas, and snowclad fells,

And everlasting ice-built piles,
 Has wing'd his way to Britain's isles
 On native gales: and, while we slept,
 With soft and gelid pinion swept, 590
 Light as the rapid swallows skim,
 Each crisped water's crackling brim,
 Pool, freshet, brook; and, as he flew,
 Caught, ere it fell, the VAPOURY DEW,
 And hung the grass, the boughs, the leaves,
 Each loftier roof's projecting eaves,
 Each cottage thatch, each window'd bower,
 With SYMPTOMS of his magick POWER.

He breathes: and lo! are brought to pass
 Strange wonders on the pictured GLASS, 600
 Sportive and strange: that fancy's eye,
 In that romantick imagery,
 Amus'd may see, or think it sees,
 *The portraiture of plants and trees,
 Which o'er some rugged rock incline;
 The feather'd fern, the branching pine;
 Here scatter'd tufts of sprouting moss,
 Here wreaths which mimic flow'rs emboss.
 Or yet unfolded buds; and there
 Loose crests of undulating hair, 610
 Plumes such as grace the soaring crane,
 The ostrich' wing, the peacock's train.

Along each WINDOW'S transverse EDGE,
 Along the ROOF'S o'erhanging LEDGE,
 And garden WALL, whose bevell'd cope
 Slants inward with descending slope,
 Constrain'd its trickling course to stop
 By hand unseen, the liquid drop

In many a lucid row depends ;
 And gathering more and more extends, 620
 Its taper length, as bright and clear
 As pendant in a lady's ear.

O'er the bare HEDGE and COPPICE brown,
 On shelter'd BANK, and open DOWN.
 Or where the GARDEN's living skreen
 Of laurel shows its pleasant green ;
 The leaves, the twigs, the bending stems
 Of tender herbage shine with gems
 Of solid pearl ; or what may seem.
 As, waving in the orient beam 630
 They round their sparkling rays diffuse
 Of changeful light and varied hues,
 The sea-green beryl's brilliant shine,
 Or diamond from GOLCONDA's mine.

COME NOW, for fine the day, and hard
 The village road, the grassy sward ;
 Climb we the winding path, that guides
 Around the mountain's craggy sides ;
 Roam the wide down, the breezy heath,
 And freshness, health, and gladness breathe. 640
 What than this wintry scene more fair ?
 What purer than this WINTRY AIR,
 The frame to strengthen, and impart
 New spirit to the buoyant heart ?

And fail we not aside to look
 In passing on the MOUNTAIN BROOK,

And mark the amusive fancies play'd
 By nature with the wild cascade.
Here, where the channel'd waters glide
 Along the vale, on either side 650
 Is edg'd the green o'erhanging grass
 With fringe of silver-seeming glass.
Here, where o'er dam, or mill-wheel steep,
 Amass'd the plunging waters leap,
 Or ere the scatter'd spray escapes,
 'Tis caught, and moulded into shapes
 Fantastick by the WIZARD FROST:
 Thin splinters, by each other crost,
 And crusting o'er the slippery stones;
 Ascending spires, inverted cones, 660
 Pellucid store of crystal spars
 Concrete, and radiated stars.

• Then, where the spacious POOL expands,
 A pleasure new the sight demands,
 As o'er the level smooth we pace
 With feet unwet; and thro' its face
 Translucent mark the bending reed
 Beneath, and every floating weed,
 And every pebbly stone below;
 Clear as imbedded insects show, 670
 Or leaves, within the amber tear,
 Or as the Alpine crystal clear.

Nor fail we thro' the wood to stray,
 Now that each branch, and bough, and spray,
 Is cloth'd with rime of moisture frore:—
 So thickly is that mantle hoar

Of rich embroidery o'er them thrown,
 They seem almost transform'd to stone.
 Chief in that long-drawn AVENUE,
 Where those columnar trees you view 680
 In ranks to answering trees oppos'd,
 And overhead their branches clos'd
 To form a fretted arch above ;
 Fancy might deem the pillar'd grove,
 With arch, and fret, and groinings graced,
 And nature's richest tracery laced,
 A solemn TEMPLE fit to raise
 High anthems to the MAKER's praise.

Such TEMPLES, art's sublimest work,
 Majestick LINCOLN, stately YORK, 690
 Are ye ! And THOU of simpler mien,
 Whose matchless spire, ascending seen
 Far o'er that Druid-hallow'd plain,
 Turns to the sun its gilded vane !
 And such, whose long perspective range
 Of mullion'd lights, with interchange
 Of storied buttress, greets the sight
 Of traveller from yon western height,
 Thou, WINTON !—Oft thy antique pile,
 Thy length of nave, and high-roof'd aisle, 700
 Long since with boyish step I paced ;
 And window, shrine, and pillar traced
 With boyish eye.—Now far away
 In age to thee the debt I pay
 Of memory for my early time :
 When in my boyhood's opening prime
 That pinnacled and window'd tower,
 Which crowns fair learning's classick bower,

And shares with thee the rival claim
 Of interest in thy WYKEHAM's name, 710
 Enroll'd me in its stoled train ;
 And, stranger yet to care and pain,
 Youth, health, and sport my footsteps led
 By ITCHIN's banks, round CATHERINE's head.
 Ev'n then, as now, I lov'd to share
 The freshness of the frosty air,
 Pleas'd to explore the incrusted wood,
 Upland, and brook, and frozen flood ;
 But little apt, (for graver themes
 Accord but ill with school-boys' dreams,) 720
 Too little apt, with pleasure sought
 To mingle heart-improving thought,
 And, bee-like, from the fragrant flower
 Cull sweets of salutary power !

Thus wrapt in musing as I roam,
 The star of evening lights me home.
 And now perchance may charm the eye
 That marvel of the wintry sky,
 Which the cold regions of the north
 Pour with refulgent brightness forth, 730
 Dark winter's child, of midnight born,
 But lustrous as the summer morn.
 BEHOLD and WONDER ! Now the gleams
 Of light in undulating streams
 Quick-darting, quivering, sparkling, spread,
 Streaking the blue with fiery red.
 And now athwart heav'n's cope they go,
 And span it with a burning bow,

From earth's west side to the eastern ridge
 Built, zenith-ways, a flaming bridge. 740
 And now with upward course aspire
 Pillars and pyramids of fire ;
 From the dark clouds upshooting rays,
 Like flames that from the furnace blaze ;
 And signs of battle in the air,
 Spears as of blood, and shafts of war !

Nor want there 'mid the flashing stream,
 SOUNDS which those warlike sights bescem :—
 The noise of conflict, hurtling high ;
 The clang of arms ; the trumpet's cry ; 750
 The war-steeds rushing to the fight ;
 The whistling of the arrowy flight ;
 Thick-falling shafts, like dashing hail ;
 And banners rustling in the gale.

Such signs with wonder, rais'd to awe
 And thrilling fear, our fathers saw,
 And PORTENTS deem'd of ills to come,
 Impending wars and monarchs' doom
 Presaging !—More instructed we
 Symptoms of no strange portents see, 760
 But of that HIDDEN POW'R, that lies
 Conceal'd in NATURE'S mysteries ;
 But comes, obedient to her call,
 The wonder and delight of all,
 With eyes upon her works to gaze,
 With hearts to feel, and tongues to praise.
 Unwise, unless in nature's laws
 We own and laud th' ordaining CAUSE,
 Whose voice his future creatures heard,
 Which gave them being, and conferr'd 770

On each, in his creative hour,
The guiding rule, the obsequious pow'r:
Who form'd the light, and bade it know
His sovereign will, that it might go,
And, compassing the vaulted sphere,
Return and say, "Behold me here*!"

Here oft, 'tis said, the experienc'd eye
May signs of future CHANGE descry:
In those bright lights presages plain
Of blustering winds, and snow, and rain. 760

And see, it comes, the threaten'd snow!
Behold, yon MOUNTAIN'S ridgy row,
Which shew'd last night its naked crown,
With rock or scatter'd heather brown,
Is white. The knolls that from it swell,
Each peak abrupt, each crevic'd dell,
That girds the elevated height,
With one continuous cloak is white.
The mountain's head has caught the storm:
Half down their less ambitious form 790
The sides as yet uncover'd show,
Groves, meadows, gardens: and below
The vale in peace reposes still,
Unswept beneath the sheltering hill.

And is't not so with human life?
And when disaster's storms are rife,
Strike they not oft the imperial crown,
Or coronet, of high renown,

* Job xxxviii. 35.

And eminent for rank or race,
 The first in merit as in place ; 800
 While o'er the peasant's lowly cot,
 And the mid station's modest lot,
 Unfelt and innocent have past
 The whelming load, the driving blast !

Ah ! little think they of the sword,
 Suspended o'er the feastful board
 On the frail tenure of a thread,
 Which threatens the monarch's crowned head ;
 Who on that crowned head askance
 Cast a malignant envious glance ; 810
 Or, anxious for an ampler range,
 Sigh for that dangerous state to change
 Their pleasant homestead's calm recess,
 Which comfort, peace, and safety bless !

And yet not seldom upon ALL
 Doth desolation's tempest fall ;
 Alike the HIGH and LOWLY sweep
 With ruthless pinion, and a heap
 Of sorrow overwhelming bring
 On subject, peasant, peer, and king :— 820
 (Avert the suffering from our times,
 All gracious God ! nor for our crimes,
 Or for our fathers', let thy power
 On us and ours such vengeance shower !—)
 Ev'n as the storm, which now has spent
 Aloft its burden, and content
 Forbears to load the humble vale ;
 May charge again the northern gale,

To deal around more wide and far
 The implements of wintry war ; 830
 Nor linger on the mountain's crest,
 But all its sides and feet invest :
 Till feet, and sides, and lordly head
 With one o'ermantling cloak be spread,
 One GENERAL RUIN, white and wan,
 Obscuring all the works of man !

Again it comes ! Throughout the sky,
 Above, below, the SNOW-FLAKES fly.
 Not now in hasty show'rs, that spend
 Their eager force, and quickly end : 840
 But ceaseless, as with stedfast aim
 No sojourn of a day to claim.
 Not now in storms of scatter'd sleet :
 But dense, in one continuous sheet ;
 • As if a yeil, by magick flung,
 Were o'er the face of nature hung ;
 Or one broad curtain round the sphere
 Inclos'd her ample theatre. •

Thick FALL the floating FLAKES, as light,
 As fine, as soft, as pure, as white, 850
 As the wind-waver'd egret's crest ;
 Or the warm down that lines the breast
 Of swans, or hyperborean geese,
 By winter bleach'd ; or like the fleece,
 Fresh from the stream, that whitens o'er,
 Heaps upon heaps, the shearing floor,
 What time the jocund shepherds cull
 From summer flocks their weight of wool.

As white, and light, and soft as locks
 Of wool, that clothe the unshorn flocks, 860
 DESCEND the snow-flakes from the sky:
 Descended on the EARTH they LIE,
 As spread in one continuous piece
 O'er the broad floor the new-shorn fleece.

First a thin sheet around is spread,
 Like that the early hoar frosts shed,
 A superficial covering, spare
 And incomplete: thro' which, whate'er
 Of ROUGHNESS on earth's surface lies,
 PROTRUDED yet the sight desecies. 870
 The trench round clumps of verdure drawn,
 The path that winds about the lawn,
 On the mown turf the flow'r-bed's edge,
 The new-turn'd fallow's furrow'd ledge,
 Of larger bulk the pebbles strow'd
 Unbroken on the beaten road,
 The tussocks of the pastur'd leas,
 The roots upstanding of the trees;
 Each marks awhile its proper place:
 And yet the inquiring eye may trace, 880
 'Mid the white coat appearing still,
 Tho' white itself, a little hill.

But soon more dense the cloak is grown,
 Each TRACE of old DISTINCTION FLOWN.
 And now on road, or pathway led
 Round verdant lawn, or flowery bed;
 On furrow'd field, and tussock'd lea,
 And root-heav'd herbage, nought you see,

But one white surface, smooth and plain,
One undistinguish'd broad champaign. 890

Each FLOW'N, by autumn's hand uncropt
Or early winter, now o'ertopt,
Beneath the snow wreaths arching round
Its grave and winding sheet has found.

About each humble SHRUB below,
Step after step the gathering snow
From leaf to leaf, from bough to bough,
Creeps up with silent pace: and now
It meets the topmost spike above,
And wraps them in an ambient cove. 900

The DYKES, that bordering lands divide,
The BANK that skirts the sloping side, •
Along the field the hedgerow BUSH,
Fringing the pool the waving RUSH,
Feel by degrees the snow-pile spread,
•Ascend their sides, surmount their head;
Like Island rocks, which wont to brave
The inroads of the circling wave;
But, when the full-orb'd moon presides,
From ridge to ridge, the surging tides, 910
From peak to loftier peak advance,
Till all is but the sea's expanse.

'Tis STILLNESS all. No rustick sound
Disturbs the air's repose profound:
Unless the due repeated flail,
Or quick brush of the winnowing sail,
Give sign that toil is busy now;
Tho' high above the buried plough

Lies the piled heap ; nor from the stall,
 Obsequious to the herdman's call, 920
 Go forth the KINE and crowded SHEEP :
 More pleas'd the well-stor'd crib to keep,
 And homestead, than to hunt their feed
 Precarious thro' the snowclad mead.

The labouring TEAM, that on the road
 Creeps onward with its lumbering load ;—
 You see the toiling horses strain,
 And slow course of the struggling wain :
 But wheel with solid iron bound,
 Nor the arm'd hoot that paws the ground, 930
 You hear ; as if they cautious trod,
 With "felt," the madman's vision, "shod * !"

Hard by, the Rook and stalking Crow
 Mark with their claws the indented snow,
 Intent, for now the buried field
 Nor grub, nor worm, nor grain can yield,
 Intent to pick, as best they may,
 Their breakfast from the travell'd way.

The blithe sounds of the poultry yard
 Are hush'd and mute : the tenants scar'd, 940
 Confounded, by the glaring white,
 Couch in their roosts with dumb affright,
 Forestall the slow approach of eve,
 Nor with the morn their refuge leave.

The LITTLE BIRDS, that used to hop
 Around, the budding spray to crop,

* Shakespeare ; *King Lear*.

It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe
 A troop of horse with felt.

Or on the lurking insect prey;
 Represt by famine, where are they?
 Come, clear a space the window round;
 And scatter on the gravelly ground, 950
 Or well-swept sill, the refuse crumb.—
 Soon will the pension'd stragglers come;
 He first, the bird with ruddy breast,
 And chaffinch with his light blue crest;
 And sparrow brown, and apt to flit
 On hasty wing the blue-crown'd tit,
 Bright buntings with their yellow pens,
 Green birds, and sober-suited wrens.
 Begrudge not, from your MORNING FARE
 For them a slender DOLE to spare! 960
 They'll pay you by their sportive ways,
 Their harmless mirth, their vernal lays,
 The thought, that under God to you
 • Their sport, their joys, their song is due.
 But chief begrudge not to expand
 With wider scope the LIBERAL HAND
 These wintry days; and from your store
 Disperse your bounty to the poor!
 Small meed have they in turn to show
 But the heart's thanks: yet yours the glow 970
 Of joy, for bliss to others given,
 And hope that 'tis enroll'd in heaven!

Alas, for him, who now must go
 His JOURNEY o'er the lonely SNOW,
 Where mile on mile extended lies,
 Before his faint and failing eyes,

The dazzling whiteness of the PLAIN!
 No track is there of custom'd wain;
 Or horses' hoofs, his puzzled view
 To guide; or peasant's nailed shoe; 980
 Or sheep-dog's foot, that o'er the wold
 Might lead him to the shepherd's fold.
 So on he fares his doubtful way,
 Perplex'd, and more and more astray:
 So on he fares, with gazing blind,
 With aching heart, and wilder'd mind:
 So on he fares, with feet that keep
 Weak hold and frail, till slumber creep
 O'er his spent frame, in deadly league
 With cold, and hunger, and fatigue: 990
 And down, o'erspent, o'erwhelm'd, he sinks.
 In wild delirious vision thinks
 He sees at hand his cottage door,
 And sleeps, to wake on earth no more!

Or where along the mountain's side,
 Or cavern'd chalk-pit yawning wide, "
 Or hollow lane, in cloudy DRIFT
 Aloft the eddying whirlwinds lift
 The snow. O'er gates, and fencing pales,
 Banks, hedges, walls, the mass prevails. 1000
 Heap piled on heap, and wreath on wreath,
 Ascending grows: while far beneath
 Conceal'd the treacherous pit-fall lies,
 Prepar'd to catch with dread surprise
 The way-worn traveller, and inhume
 Its victim in the unwonted tomb.

Such piteous fate was hers, whose name
 Has gain'd a melancholy fame,
 Her Christmas hearth's enlivening cheer
 Chang'd for the snow-wreath'd cavern drear. 1010
 Eight days within her lonely cell
 Immur'd she lay; and twice the bell,
 Which told the sabbath's holy time,
 Smote on her ear with mournful chime.
 O, then how heav'd her breast to join
 The train, that sought God's sacred shrine:
 "Ev'n as the hart doth pant to lave,
 O'erhunted, in the cooling wave*!"
 And, O, what joy were hers, to raise
 In God's own house the voice of praise: 1020
 "Ev'n as the dove delights to rest
 Still in her own accustom'd nest†!"
 "O, had she erst, in safety's hour,
 • Confess'd religion's guiding pow'r;
 God's house each former sabbath sought,
 And practis'd what his precepts taught:
 Not now perhaps her lot had been
 The prison dark, the anguish keen,
 Eight tedious days, eight weary nights,
 Estrang'd from life, and life's delights, 1030
 To feel in cheerless, hopeless gloom,
 Alive the horrors of the tomb.
 And, render'd back to light and air,
 Not hers the lot had been to bear
 A feeble, mutilated frame,
 Diseases'd, emaciate, helpless, lame;

* Psalm xlii. 1

† Psalm lxxxiv. 3.

A spectacle of woe to lie
 A few brief months, and pine, and die.
 Watch! when the sparkling wine is up,
 And flames, and dances in the cup *‡ 1040
 Lest unawares that unknown day
 Come and arrest you! "WATCH and PRAY†!"—

The YEAR is CLOSED! The TALE is DONE!
 For see, again the wintry sun
 His southmost goal of rest attains;
 Again from yon ethereal plains
 His rays with faintest lustre glow,
 And span them with the briefest bow.

Since last he form'd that briefest arch,
 We've track'd him on his MONTHLY MARCH; 1050
 Seen him with equal course divide
 The morning and the evening tide;
 Seen him from yon north-western height
 Scarce yield the reign to short-liv'd night;
 Seen him give waning day to bear
 Again with night but equal share;
 Till now again his 'lowest place
 He holds, and runs his shortest race."
 And still, with every MONTHLY CHANGE
 And PERIOD of the yearly range, 1060
 What chiefest nature's works present
 To please the eye, the ear, the scent,
 To clothe the earth, to soar the heaven,
 Studious of nature's charms I've striven

* Prov. xxiii. 31.

† Matt. xxvi. 41.

- With faithful but poetick pen
 To offer to the mental ken:
 Not deeply vers'd in nature's store,
 Nor vain of scientifick lore,
 Nor anxious for poetick fame;
 But prompt to honour nature's claim 1070
 To love from all her progeny,
 Whose ears can hear, whose eyes can see,
 Whose hearts, not made of stone or steel,
 Her simple charms can taste and feel:—
 Careful meanwhile from things of sense
 To draw improving musings; thence
 The mind to wholesome thought to move,
 To warm the heart to virtue's love,
 But most, both mind and heart to lead
 Above, and stimulate to read, 1080
 Howe'er the living Spirit dwell
 • Beyond all sight invisible,
 • God in his lower works exprest,
 • The first, the last, the greatest, best!

•
 •
 •
 CLOS'D is the YEAR! THE TALE IS DONE!
 O THOU, of whom, when first begun,
 My strain a gleam of light implor'd,
 O nature's universal LORD,
 Accept my HOMAGE, while I bend
 And crave thy BLESSING at its end! 1090

But FIRST for health, from day to day
 Enabling me at will to stray
 Month after month abroad, and muse
 On each, and mark its varying views;—

For health of mind, to take delight
 In nature, and what met my sight
 And hearing, to collect, combine ;
 And thence in tissued web to twine
 Of verse continuous, through the year,
 The aspects of our changeful sphere ;— 1100
 For soothing thoughts, which thence relief
 Have minister'd to many a grief,
 And many a rising sigh repress ;—
 For many a pleasure, which the breast
 Alone in sweet retirement proved,
 Or haply shared with those it loved ;—
 For these attendants on my theme,
 No idle visionary dream,
 But solid blessings kindly dealt
 By THEE, by me as mercies felt : 1110
 Receive my GRATEFUL SPIRIT'S vow,
 The heart's best incense, while I bow .
 With THANKS before thy mercy-seat,
 And thus thy further grace intreat.

If thou this world so good and fair
 Hast made, that we depictur'd there
 Thy Power and Deity may know,
 O BLESS the VERSE, which fain would show
 To those, who cast their eyes around,
 What pleasurable things abound, 1120
 Things before all in common placed,
 Which high and low alike may taste,
 On this fair earth, thy pleasant gift ;
 And then the mental sight would lift,
 There stamp'd thy attributes to see,
 And in thy works acknowledge Thee !

If aught herein of TAINT be found,
 Thy truth to mar, thy honour wound ;
 If aught to warp the mind or heart
 From wisdom's, virtue's, better part : 1130
 (For who of all his words is sure ?—)
 Keep thou the reader's bosom pure,
 Clean from his sight the mischief blot.

And on the involuntary spot
 With eye of tender pity look,
 Nor mark it in thy judgment book !

But if (thy servant's meek design !)
 PURE be each thought, and word, and line ;
 If fit, to thine own truth referr'd,
 To bear the touchstone of thy word ; 1140
 If fit to lead the excursive sense
 In paths of blameless innocence ;
 If fit the safe abode to show,
 Where heartfelt harmless pleasures grow ;
 If fit improvement's task to blend
 With pleasure, and the heart to mend ;
 If fit to train and aid the soul . . .

To feel religion's mild control ;
 But most of all, and what may most
 Be deem'd man's triumph and his boast, 1150
 If fit to serve THEE, and ensue,

LORD, to THY name the honour due :—
 Then for these rhimes MAKE THOU A WAY,
 These musings to the heart convey
 Of those whose native taste delights
 In rural sounds and rural sights ;
 Of those, by whom with joy are scann'd
 The wonders of thy plastick hand !

Hence prompt them more and more to own
Thy pow'r in nature's volume shown! 1160
Hence prompt them more and more to look
And read THEE in thy written book!
And, since from THEE alone descend,
Thee "the beginning and the end,"
Gifts good and precious from above,
FATHER of LIGHTS and FOUNT of LOVE!
If aught of pleasure or of use
These unambitious strains produce,
The glory, LORD, be only thine;
Thy own approving favour mine! 1170

THE END.

THE
BRITISH MONTHS;
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IN TWELVE PARTS.

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Lord, who would live turmoiled in the Court,
And may enjoy such quiet walks as these :

SHAKESPEARE, King Henry VI, Part 2

Did he not moralize this spectacle :
O, ye, into a thousand similes

SHAKESPEARE, As You Like it.

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